# The Mennonite Quarterly Review

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## EDITORIAL

THE CURRENT INTENSIVE STUDY OF ANABAPTIST THEOLOGY WILL BE WELL SERVED BY THE report of an examination of the testimonies of the earlier Anabaptist martyrs of the 16th century presented by A. Orley Swartzentruber in the current and succeeding issues of the REVIEW. It is true, as is pointed out, that since there were both learned martyrs and martyrs of the common people the testimonies have for this reason alone unequal value. The varied purpose and nature of the testimonies is also a significant factor, some being lengthy letters to relatives and friends, some apologies to trial judges, some answers to the inquisition, and some evangelistic appeals. Hence it is impossible to prepare statistical summaries on the various theological loci. But at least the chief motifs or emphases can be reported. Another aspect of the problem arises from the considerable spread in place and time of the martyrdoms and the accompanying statements. This makes still more difficult the development of a uniform and harmonious picture of the theology of the martyrs. What connection is there between a Michael Sattler of Wüttemberg of 1527 and a Jaques d'Auchy of Friesland of 1559, four hundred miles and thirty-two years apart? Theological statements and confessions (Marpeck, Riedemann, Menno Simons, Dirk Philips, etc.) are perhaps more important, but the authentic voice of the martyrs is nevertheless a significant part of the Anabaptist testimony. Following the presentation of the evidence from the van Braght martyrology, there will be a similar report from the Swiss *Ausbund* (1564) which is also a martyrology, an anthology of martyr hymns.

THE APPEAL FROM PFARRER HANS GEORG FISCHER OF VIENNA FOR A RECONSIDERATION BY Lutherans of their conventional evaluation of Anabaptism is in spirit addressed to modern Lutherans. It does in fact reflect some recent discussions in Lutherdom, including at least one among the Vienna Lutheran clergy. The questions set and answered by Fischer are indicative of the issues involved in the "vindication of the Anabaptist way." "Is the faith of the Anabaptists founded on the word of the Scriptures?" "Are the Anabaptists perfectionists?" Actually Fischer drives deeply into the question of "works-righteousness" vs. "justification by faith." The answers are based upon sound source-study, the spirit of the debate is irenic, and the solution is constructive. Why need Anabaptists and Lutherans fight each other? Their positions are complementary, not incompatible. The full Gospel requires the essence of both positions, and each can help to defend the other from the "vices of his virtues." Our stand today need not and should not be that of 1530 or 1570, but that of the Gospel itself rightly understood with the help of our common and divergent past.

THE CONVENTIONAL EVANGELISTIC AND MISSIONARY APPROACH TO THE NON-CHRISTIAN in the Western world usually assumes a certain common background of "Christian" culture as between the missionary and the non-Christian, including knowledge of the Christian doctrine and its source book the Bible, as well as a generally favorable inclination toward Christianity and its ideals, and counts on this background to aid in the winning of the recipient of the proclamation. But this is by no means always the case. When it is not, then the problem of communication as well as the problem of winning the convert becomes very difficult. It is most difficult when the missionary is unaware of the problem. David Shank, charged with a missionary assignment in modern Belgium, is thoroughly aware of both the problem and its difficulty. In his article in this issue, "A Missionary Approach to a Dechristianized Society," he grapples earnestly with it. He finds that both the message and the method must be reconsidered; the conventional approach will not work—of that he is certain. But he is confident that the real Gospel can be effectively presented. In his search for the right answer Shank reaches out into difficult areas of criticism of Western Christianity, with a sharp alertness to the present challenge from the Communist side. The overtones of this critical analysis carry implications far beyond the local situation in Western Europe.

THE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL AND RESEARCH NOTES IN THIS ISSUE DEAL WITH THREE WIDELY separated areas: Manitoba Mennonite house architecture, the difficulties of research in Mennonite genealogy in the Lower Rhine area, and periodical bibliography on Mennonite history in non-Mennonite periodicals.

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# THE PIETY AND THEOLOGY OF THE ANABAPTIST MARTYRS IN VAN BRAGHT'S *MARTYRS' MIRROR*, I

A. ORLEY SWARTZENTRUBER*

The Mennonite martyrology known to us as the *Martyrs' Mirror* was compiled by Thieleman J. van Braght and first printed in 1660, the last and largest in a long series of martyrologies produced by the Dutch Mennonites, in which each edition was an expansion of the preceding one. Van Braght produced not only a new edition of the Mennonite martyrology, but added to it a voluminous product of his own pen, a collection of accounts of earlier Christian martyrs who, as he describes them, "baptized only upon confession of faith, and who suffered and died for the testimony of Jesus, their Savior, from the time of Christ to the year 1660." In van Braght this constitutes the "First Part," and this paper is not concerned with it in any way since it lies outside of the scope of the study. Strictly speaking, van Braght's edition of the Mennonite martyrology is his "Second Part" only, and it is with this that we are here concerned. For this study I have used the fourth edition (1570) of *Het Offer des Heeren,* edited with critical notes for the *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica* by Dr. S. Cramer (1904), and our current English translation of van Braght, by Joseph F. Sohm, published in 1886 in Elkhart.

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The ancestry of the *Martyrs' Mirror* dates back to 1562, when a book appeared under the title *Het Offer des Heeren* (The Sacrifice of the Lord, herafter denoted by the symbol OH), bearing a date but not the name of a compiler or printer. It was a small, pocket-sized book, intended for edification. It began with a short preface, followed by the account of the death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, taken from Acts 6 and 7. This was followed by the account of the trial and death of Michael Sattler at Rottenburg (Württemberg), and the rest of the book was taken up with the accounts of twenty-one Netherlanders, six from the North and fifteen from the South (today Belgium). Four years later, in 1566, a second edition was printed, with two additional accounts of martyrs killed in 1564. An identical edition was printed the following year. Then, in 1570, a fourth edition appeared with six new names, a hymn following each account from Stephen's on, and, at the end, an appendix of hymns. This hymnary appendix also has an interesting history, and can be considered the Dutch counterpart of the *Ausbund*.

Just one year after the first edition of OH was printed, there appeared a *Liedtboecxken* containing twenty-five hymns on Anabaptist martyrdoms. Like OH, the *Liedtboecxken* went through three editions before 1570, and in this year it was published as an appendix to it, as mentioned above. All the subsequent editions of OH include this appendix, and the late editions add a few hymns to it, in addition to the other accounts added in the main body. Cramer valued this *Liedtboecxken* so highly that instead of editing the first edition of OH for the *Bibliotheca Reformatoria,* as would have been the standard procedure, he chose instead the fourth in order to be able to include the hymnbook with it. The hymns are written in regular stanzas so they can be sung to various melodies, both sacred and secular. And one can appreciate, even without thorough knowledge of Dutch idiom, the unsophisticated manner in which these hymns recount dialogues between inquisitors and witnesses, or describe horrible tortures and executions in sprightly ballad rhythms and short meter. If we compare these hymns with what we have of them in our English translation of van Braght, where they appear among the other accounts in their chronological order, retold in fussy Victorian prose, we can estimate what time, editions and translations have subtracted from those early testimonies. There is an evolution already in the process of the editions from 1562 to 1660. The compilation of a martyrology involves selection, much of it inevitable and

unconscious. Whereas all the accounts contained in the first edition of OH were earlier than 1560, in van Braght two thirds of the volume is given to accounts later than 1560. If we recall that the first period of Anabaptism is over not later than 1560, we realize that even without the emasculation of successive editions, the sheer overbalance of the later testimonies would have the effect of shifting the reader's attention to a center somewhat removed from the real springs of the movement, the early period.

The last edition of OH (the eleventh) appeared in 1599. Most of the sixteenth century had been a time of persecution for the Anabaptists. Leonhard Schiemer's cry, "They make the world too small for us," could be repeated at one place or another throughout the entire century. But the north Netherlands had begun to show some tolerance for the Anabaptists; a new period begins for the Dutch brotherhood, and also in the story of the editions of the martyrology. Ds. N. van der Zijpp, in his recent (1952) *History of the Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands,* gives a paragraph full of information on this period:

About 1600 the world became roomier for the Anabaptists; the persecutions had ceased; the golden century began, and the Doopsgezinden also would occupy their place in it, a distinguished place, both as regards commerce and public activity, and as regards cultural life in the narrower sense. To be sure, they still had to endure much from the side of the Calvinists or Reformed, but the authorities were already beginning to appreciate and protect them. From this position they began to look back on the past. There was a past that could not be looked upon except with shame, the time when each had denied the Christian name to the other with excommunication. But there was also another past, to which all together could lay claim, be they divided into ever so many groups and parties at the moment: that past when brethren and sisters had given up their lives for their faithfulness to Christ. Was that forgotten? "Comforts have increased but zeal has diminished. Clothes have become costly but the inner adornment is gone. Love has cooled and waned and quarrels have increased," complains de Ries. And he believes that only love for the Lord can save the divided brotherhood; therefore, he concludes, they must look back to the martyrs. De Ries did not stand alone in this. The view also prevailed among the leaders of the other groups that the past was in many respects better than the present. With diligence and dedication they set themselves to the task of collecting information on the martyrs; much time and effort was devoted to this work by Frisians, Flemings and Waterlanders alike. The Frisians gave information about Frisia, the Flemish hunted diligently and closely at the same time for everything they could find out from relatives about the martyrs in the South Netherlands. The Waterlanders on their own initiative sent a brother from their midst to Germany, Austria, and Moravia to collect accounts of martyrs, and so a new and enlarged martyrology could replace the old *Offer des Heeren.* The new book appeared in 1615 at Hoorn under the title *Historie der Martelaeren ofte waerachtighe Getuygen Jesu Christi enz.* De Ries wrote a

preface for it. But it seemed that an evil spirit had possessed the brotherhood: even over the book of the martyrs, which more than anything else called to love and unity, there developed a contention. In 1617 the Old Frisians published under the title *Historie der warachtighe getuygen Jesu Christi* a reprint of de Ries's edition, with the significant omission of his conciliating preface, and the addition of a rigid confession of faith, doubtless from the pen of the Old-Frisian Elder P. J. Twisck. As they later noticed, to their alarm, that the old-Mennistic doctrine of the Incarnation did not come out strongly enough in de Ries's book, and that—in their judgment—it had been deliberately left out, they published an improved edition in 1626, now entitled *Historie van de Vrome Getuygen Jesu Christi.* De Ries's work of 1615 is reprinted in 1631 with the addition of a number of martyrs, under the title *Martelaers-Spiegel der Werelose Christenen of Doopsgesinden.* And we might add that T. J. van Braght, building on the work of de Ries, put out his large Martyrs' Mirror in 1660, of which a new printing appeared in 1685, this one illustrated with Jan Luyken's fine etchings: *Het Bloedig Tooneel of Martelaers Spiegel der Doopsgesinde of Weereloose Christenen, etc.*

Since we will several times refer to "early" and "late" testimonies, it might be well to say a word about this division. The first important division in Dutch Anabaptism, between the Jorists and the orthodox, was completed about 1550. Other tensions existed already, and the question of "soft" or "hard" discipline created more divisions. There is some justification for the view that this disintegration of the brotherhood is a symptom of the disintegration of the original Anabaptist vision, and even though it is impossible to point to an exact moment in this development and call it the turning point, we may nevertheless take the date 1560 as more or less a watershed. Certain "late" developments are anticipated before that date, and "early" motifs still persist beyond this point. But in the development of piety and thought in the *Martyrs' Mirror* one notices a certain crystallization after that point, almost half-way between the entrance of Anabaptism into the Netherlands, 1530, and the end of the century, really the chronological center of the book, since the last martyr who leaves a testimony dies in 1592. If the first period is called Anabaptist, there might be some justification for the name Mennonite to describe the second period.

Not all the accounts in the *Martyrs' Mirror* are of the same type, and not all are equally valuable to us for a study such as this. For instance, under the name of Hans van Overdam appears a letter and a message which he had posted at several places throughout the city of Ghent, and which was the immediate cause of his arrest. There is an immense difference in tone between the confident piety of the letter and the almost unbelievably apocalyp-

tic and denunciatory tenor of his poster. It often happens that when the same person writes several letters one contains certain elements that are lacking in another. Consequently our study must be more of motifs than a series of "depth" studies of single letters. There are exceptions, to be sure. On the whole a study of the martyrs' testimonies makes one aware of certain recurrences, certain expressions, certain kinds of argument, and with this consciousness one may seek to find concrete statements to illustrate the direction of the entire current. The quotations used in this paper must be considered in this light; they are illustrations more than "proof texts." While this method leaves considerable freedom to subjective judgments and evaluations, I can see no alternative. A statistical approach, though valuable in certain respects, would not penetrate very deeply into the experience this martyrology represents. When a certain martyr confesses that Mary was a virgin both before and after the birth of Christ, for instance, this confession considered statistically would take on a certain importance, but since it is nowhere repeated, and since the very speculative nature of such a statement is contrary to the genius of the martyrs' faith, it must be ignored altogether. Those elements that recur, not only in formal statements but in spontaneous forms of speech or expression, are the ones we can safely take as indices of what we seek to know: what were the "active ingredients," the living elements, the regulating principles of these martyrs' lives. Repeated reading of single accounts, and of series of accounts, bring out these motifs, and the critical question becomes whether the quotation taken to represent this motif does, indeed, faithfully represent the motif, *i. e.*, whether it is "typical" or not. This paper is more a record of study, than a logical proof of some point of view. It is a question whether any other kind can be written on such a subject.

Some of the differences between accounts stem from the distinction between "confessing" and "disputing." A Christian who is young in the faith should limit himself to a "confession" or simple statement of his faith. Those who are more mature may go on into a detailed apology of their position, with any arguments at their disposal, or into an attack of the views of the Inquisitors. Hans van Overdam writes,

> Our friends that remained there were two lads and a girl, for whom we diligently prayed the Lord, fearing lest they might by some means be moved from the faith. . . . But, alas! . . . they imprudently allowed themselves to be drawn into disputations with the false prophets, though they had

been sufficiently warned to beware of it as they valued their souls, for it is not given to every one to dispute: but to confess boldly the faith that one has received from the Lord, this well becomes Christians.

In 1559 three people are put to death together at Leeuwarden: Jacques d'Auchy, a young man from Antwerp, Claesken, a woman of Leeuwarden, and Claesken's husband. The Inquisitor in this case is an unusually intelligent opponent. Jacques carries on the discussion with him in French, his native language, but changes to Dutch when he notices that people are at the door trying to hear. He cites the Church Fathers, displays astonishing knowledge of the Bible, one day reads from a German Testament the Inquisitor brings, another time identifies the Inquisitor's Latin Testament by its editor, and in every way commands the respect of the Inquisitor. Claesken, in another cell, can hear these debates and is strengthened by them, but when the Inquisitor questions her she does not dispute, she only confesses. In her letter she reports that her "poor husband, who cannot read a word" always confesses the same as Jacques and she have said, and must also suffer death. There is, then, this difference in the spiritual development of the martyrs, which makes a difference in the value of their testimonies.

Another important element of difference between accounts is the fact that some are spontaneously written letters, and others are reports of dialogue with an opponent. The martyrs seldom bring up dogmatic questions in their letters, but the debates consist of very little else: the believers must answer the questions and debate issues raised by the Inquisitors. Consequently such themes as: What do you hold concerning baptism or the mass, or the holy church? often recur, and the answers given to each of these questions might be grouped under a few headings, but it is certain that these were not the issues that moved the Anabaptists to their heroic endurance. Baptism, which seemed to unsettle the Catholics so much, is not necessary for salvation in the Anabaptist view, whether for an infant or an adult, and the discussion can not advance very far beyond the martyrs' confession, or else it develops around the subtleties of the Inquisitor's argument. Jacques d'Auchy, after several sessions devoted to baptism and the mass finally asks, "My Lord, do you suppose there is nothing else that stands in my way in your church than this, baptism and the sacrament?" Those letters in which the martyrs speak freely of matters of their own concern are really the sources of our best information.

We can classify the accounts in van Braght into five types:

1. Letters by the martyrs to persons or groups outside.
2. Letters by the martyrs relating their debates with the Inquisitors.
3. Accounts of debates, written in the third person, perhaps taken from court records.
4. Accounts in third person, describing only the execution, with a few of the "last words" of the martyr.
5. Accounts containing the name of a martyr, the place and date of execution, and a paragraph of pious comments by the compilers.

*Het Offer des Heeren* is made up of accounts of the first two kinds. In van Braght we have a number of additions of these two types, and a great number of accounts of the last types described. This may be the place to say that a living book might be made of this cumbersome old volume by a resolute trimming off of the great mass of these inconsequential short accounts, since they fill pages with names and dates but give practically nothing of the martyrs' own words. The entire "First Part" of van Braght, which represents almost half of the volume, could be left out without great loss, and the "Second Part" might be reduced in volume by at least one half without real loss of content, that is, without abridging the accounts that were included. If the translation, punctuation, and typography were brought up to date at the same time, the *Martyrs' Mirror* might again become a household book among our people.

The plan of this study is as follows: the earliest Swiss and South-German accounts (1527-29) are studied, with special reference to a long letter of Michael Sattler, then the first Dutch accounts (1527-44), with special reference to the letter of Anneken Jans. Then, passing over the intermediary accounts, a study is made of the last two accounts of the century (already contained in the last two editions of OH), with special attention to the evolution in piety which they represent, and finally a study of the doctrinal positions and evolution shown, with particular reference to the doctrine of Original Sin. For a study of the influences and causes of this evolution both in piety and in doctrinal approach a much broader study would be necessary. This is not a study of the religious situation of the sixteenth century with a view to explaining the *Martyrs' Mirror,* but a study of the martyrology with a view to finding what it reflects of the outward situation. A very restricted use is made of sources other than the martyrology itself and the critical notes by Cramer in OH.

Since the pagination of OH differs from one printing to another, and since the accounts are in their chronological order, I give the date of execution after martyrs' names as sufficient reference.

## Michael Sattler's Letter to the Congregation at Horb, May 1527

Among the earliest Anabaptist documents we possess are several rather brief tracts attributed to Michael Sattler. Among them there are two that stand out, both of 1527: a letter to the congregation at Horb, which is included in the *Martyrs' Mirror,* and the better known *Brüderliche Vereinigung,* which is not. The *Brüderliche Vereinigung,* or brotherly agreement, drawn up at Schleitheim, has been edited, translated, and commented upon in several publications in English and in German during the past few years. But the letter to the congregation at Horb, which Sattler wrote in prison shortly before his death, has not received the attention it merits as a companion to the Schleitheim agreement.

The two documents are very closely related. The earliest references to the Schleitheim Agreement name Sattler as the author, and although we must allow for some modifications of his text by the group, we can accept it substantially as a product of his pen, especially the introduction and conclusion, which bear certain characteristics of Sattler's language. Both documents have as their central concern the problem of "false brethren" who threaten the spiritual unity and life of the brotherhood. Both were written within a period of three months: the Brotherly Agreement is dated February 24, 1527, and Sattler was executed on May 21. Both were printed together as a tract shortly after Sattler's death, with an account of his trial and execution. Studied together, the two documents can be seen to throw light on the same situation. The letter's special interest for us lies in this, that it complements the Schleitheim Agreement as a source on the very earliest period of Anabaptism. It completes the background against which we can understand the orthodox Michael Sattler, and it provides some positive data regarding his convictions. Let us first consider the background, and then sketch the elements of Sattler's position against it.

Sattler himself gives us some guidance for the interpretation of the letter. After laying out most of his concerns in the first half of the letter, and that with some intensity, he justifies his tone in a paragraph of explanation:

> Judge what I write to you; take these matters to heart that this abomination may be separated far from you, and that you may be found humble,

fruitful and obedient children of God. Beloved brethren, marvel not that I treat this matter with such earnestness, for I do so not without reason.

He passes then to a description of his imprisonment with others, and continues:

Once they threatened us with bonds, then with fire, and afterwards with the sword. In this peril I completely surrendered myself unto the will of the Lord, and together with all my fellow brethren and my wife prepared myself even for death for His testimony; and then I thought of the great number of false brethren, and of you who are but few, namely a little flock; and also that there are but few faithful laborers in the Lord's vineyard, Matt. 9:37, hence I deemed it necessary to stir you up by this admonition, to follow after us in the divine warfare, in order that you may not become weary of the chastening of the Lord.

After reflection Sattler visualizes death as a possible outcome. When he has become convinced in his spirit of the possibility of such an outcome he is at peace, except for one thing, his feeling that the false brethren threaten the life of the congregation by their teaching and practice. We get the impression from the letter that they are not just a few individuals but more in the nature of a faction; they are strong enough, at any rate, to fill Sattler's soul with apprehension.

Who are these "false brethren"? All the indications point to individuals within the congregation; in other words, they are heterodox Anabaptists. Essentially they are spiritualists or enthusiasts:

This love (I Cor. 13) has been adulterated by some brethren (I know who they are); they have not been willing to edify one another by love, but are become puffed up and unprofitable with the vain knowledge and understanding of things which God would have remain hidden to all but Himself alone. I Cor. 8:1. I do not censure nor reject the grace and revelation of God, but the puffed up abuse this revelation. What would it profit, says Paul, if I should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and understand all mysteries and knowledge, and have all faith. Tell me, what profit is all this, if love be not exercised? You have experienced what such presumptuous speaking and ignorance has produced; you still daily see their fruits, though they have given themselves to God.

And he continues with a pointed reference to the objective revelation in the Scriptures, which underlines his opposition to their pneumatic inspirations:

And let no man remove you from the foundation which is laid through the letter of the Holy Scriptures, and is sealed through the blood of Christ and of many witnesses of Jesus. Hear not what they say of their father, for he is a liar; and do not believe their spirit, for he is entirely swallowed up in the flesh.

This last reference to spirit swallowed up in the flesh points to an antinomian tendency which accompanies enthusiasm. This same tendency is referred to in other phrases in the letter:

Beware, beware of such as act contrary to the command of God lest you learn their abominations. . . .

Then you can present yourselves to God your heavenly Father, a pure, godly, true church of Christ, which is cleansed through His blood (Eph. 5:26), that it may be holy and unblamable in the sight of God and men, separated from all idolatry and abomination.

. . . they also forget all His commandments. . . .

You know, my most beloved fellow members, that it becomes us to conduct ourselves in a godly and Christian manner. II Tim. 3:12. Take heed, watch and pray, lest your wisdom bring judgment upon you. . . . Forget that which is carnal, that you may in truth be called Christians and children of the most high God.

It seems, however, that the chief and outstanding manifestation of this tendency was the attitude some manifested toward suffering: "the cross." Apparently the pneumatics attempted to explain life in Christ as an altogether spiritual and inward reality, and faced with the danger of persecution they used this argument to justify their withdrawing from such overt conduct as might incriminate them before the authorities. This seems to be what is referred to in the following expressions, scattered through the letter:

. . . those who will not walk in the right paths and living ways of Christ, namely, through crosses, misery, imprisonment, self-denial, and ultimately through death.

. . . let no one divert you from your aim, as has been the case with some even until now; but go straight on in all patience, without deviating, that you do not take up the cross . . . only to lay it down. . . .

Do not become weary if you are chastened by the Lord. . . . If you will not be chastened according to the will of the Father you cannot inherit His riches. . . .

. . . there are but few who will endure the chastening of the Lord; for by far the greater number, when they suffer a little in the flesh, become faint and weary and no longer look unto Jesus, the Captain and Finisher of their faith. . . . Moreover there are some who, when this is presented to them, accuse God, though very unjustly, of not being willing to keep them under His protection. You know whom I mean, take heed that you have no fellowship with them.

More might be quoted in this tenor. Indeed, if it were not for a few expressions such as "idolatry and abomination," which must refer

to other, gross sins, one could suppose that all of Sattler's references to carnality and to the commandments of God are aimed at this one point, namely, that discipleship requires open obedience and suffering. In the paragraph in which he explains the purpose of the letter, quoted earlier, he says, "I deemed it necessary to stir you up . . . that you may not become weary of the chastisement of the Lord."

Sattler condemns the avoidance of the cross, but he also has some severe words to say against the pride of these spiritualists. He quotes the central paragraph of I Corinthians 13, and adds these comments:

> Understand this passage, and you will find the love of God and the love of your neighbor; and if you love God you will rejoice in the truth, and believe, hope and endure all that comes from God. In this way the aforesaid failing will be removed and avoided. But if you love your neighbor you will not excommunicate him with fire, you will not seek your own, think no evil, not vaunt yourselves and finally, not be puffed up; but will be kind, just, liberal in all giving, humble and compassionate with the weak and imperfect. Rom. 13:8.

To summarize, we can say that these "false brethren" were spiritualists, tending to antinomianism and arrogant in their higher wisdom, whose Christian commitment became confused by these admixtures. The "locus" where the weakening of their commitment became evident was the crucial point of accepting or rejecting the persecution that a courageous confession of their faith would have brought upon them: they demurred, and sought to justify this line of conduct by arguments derived from their private revelation. We know that the conflict between the orthodox and the pneumatics has often divided our brotherhood, and consequently Sattler's attitude before this situation takes on special interest for us. Confronted with these tendencies, how does Sattler react? On what grounds does he oppose the pneumatics, and by what means? Is his position the antithetic complement of theirs, does he affirm what they deny and deny what they affirm? If this were the case Sattler's position would be a derivative of theirs. A study of this statement shows that this is not the case.

The most obvious thing that Sattler is recommending is excommunication of these members. A phrase already quoted serves to introduce a direct exhortation to exercise discipline:

> Beware, beware of such as act contrary to the command of God lest ye learn their abominations; but reprove it with strict attention and excommunication, according to the command of Christ, yet with all love and compassion for their cold hearts. Matt. 18:17. . . . Then you can present yourselves to God, a pure . . . church. . . .

And other appeals of Sattler are equally clear:

> You know whom I mean, take heed that you have no fellowship with them. . . . Take these matters to heart, that this abomination may be separated far from you. . . . [Thus you will] speedily rid yourselves of them. . . .

The brief closing paragraph is full of heaviness over this situation, scarcely lightened at all by the words, "God be with you all":

> Beware of false brethren (Acts 20:39), for the Lord will perhaps call me to Him; so take warning, I wait for my God. Pray without ceasing for all that are in bonds. God be with you all. Amen.

And nevertheless it ought to be pointed out that Sattler does not undertake to excommunicate them from prison himself. Following the Pauline example, he urges the congregation to do this, not because he considers the matter trivial, but for the deeper reason that he does not consider himself authorized to act in that manner. The excommunication is to be carried out in love, for the good of both the church and those expelled, and it is to be carried out by the congregation. This much is clear.

For the reconstructing of Sattler's beliefs, this letter provides almost nothing by way of details on such questions as what he believed on baptism, communion, predestination or atonement. But it does, nevertheless, give us important clues as to the type of theology Sattler held, and which he implicitly offers in place of the heresy he combats.

One thing we may note at the outset is a tone of reminiscence, a retrospective kind of argument. Sattler, in other words, is not teaching but reminding. Several expressions he uses refer to a prior common basis: ". . . you have experienced what I now write. . . ." (Is the German word used here, *erfahren*=to experience or rather *learn?* If the latter, the meaning is even clearer, viz., you already know what I now write.) Later he refers to "wisdom." Perhaps the German text would make clearer the nuance here as well:

> *You know*, my most beloved fellow members, that it becomes us to conduct ourselves in a godly and Christian manner. II Tim. 3:12. Take heed, watch and pray, lest your *wisdom* bring judgment upon you. . . . *Remember* your forerunner, Jesus Christ, and follow Him. . . .

In one instance he refers to some previous meeting, perhaps the Schleitheim conference itself:

> Remember our assembly, and strictly follow that which was resolved on therein; and if anything has been forgotten, pray the Lord for understanding.

Whether this refers to the regular meeting of the congregation or to one particular meeting, such as the Schleitheim conference, certainly not all the expressions pointing backward to their experience have a meeting in view. The spiritualistic language he uses suggests that he has something in mind closely akin to the "illumination" of which the pneumatics boasted. The two paragraphs immediately following the greetings at the beginning of the letter leave very little doubt on this point: the believers have been entrusted with a revelation, not only the objective revelation "through the letter of the Scriptures" which he mentions once elsewhere in the letter, but subjectively, in their conscious spiritual experience:

> Dear brethren and sisters, you well know with what ardent love I admonished you the last time I was with you, that you should be upright and godly in all patience and in the love of God, by which you may be known among this adulterous and ungodly generation as shining lights, whom God the heavenly Father has illuminated with his knowledge and the light of his Spirit. With like fervency I now beseech and admonish you that you walk surely and prudently towards those that are without as unbelievers, that our office, which God has imposed upon us, may in no wise be profaned and justly reproached.
>
> Remember the Lord, who has given you the talent, for he shall require it again with usury. That the one talent may not be taken from you, put it to usury, according to the command of the Lord, who has given you the talent. Matt. 15:19.

In the light of these two paragraphs, which stand at the opening of Sattler's letter to the congregation, we can say without fear of forcing the interpretation, that his appeals to their memory, their knowledge, or their experience point essentially to a spiritual, subjective experience, which he himself does not hesitate to call an "illumination." And it seems equally clear that Sattler has this experience in common with all the members of the congregation, be they enthusiasts or orthodox.

It may be pointed out that this is an illumination received from God, not earned by meritorious works or arrived at by ascetic catharsis; it comes from an act of grace on God's part. A number of expressions show that this is how Sattler understood it:

. . . our office, which God has imposed upon us. . . .

. . . shining lights, whom God the heavenly Father has illuminated. . . .

. . . the Lord, who has given you the talent. . . .

. . . do not take up the cross which God has laid upon you, only to lay it down again. . . .

. . . I do not censure nor reject the grace and revelation of God. . . .

This last phrase is especially interesting because in its context, already quoted above, grace and revelation are almost synonyms of "illumination."

Although Christian experience is described in very subjective terms, we notice that Sattler prefers the terminology and figures that relate to Revelation: *knowledge, illumination, remember,* instead of the words and figures relating to forgiveness and cleansing, which Pietism later used. Purification is used in connection with the church, but in this cleansing the members themselves play an important part by means of evangelical discipline:

Beware, beware of such as act contrary to the command of God lest ye learn their abominations; but reprove it with strict attention and excommunication, according to the command of Christ. . . . If you do this . . . you shall witness a brief and speedy separation of those who will not walk in right paths and living ways of Christ, namely, through crosses, . . . and ultimately through death. Then you can present yourselves to God your heavenly Father, a pure, godly, true church of Christ, which is cleansed through His blood (Eph. 5:26), that it may be holy and unblamable in the sight of God and men, separated from all idolatry and abomination, and redeemed, that the Lord of all dominion may dwell in it, and that it may be a tabernacle unto Him.

The gift of the presence of God in the midst of the church depends on her members' faithfulness in keeping her pure.

Sattler's letter is more concerned with the principles involved in the fact that "false brethren" are in the church, than with precise instructions on how to proceed to their excommunication: this letter is not a manual on church order. But, fortunately, there is one brief indication as to the manner in which Sattler expected this to be carried out: it is not a legal procedure, it is pneumatic. He does not list charges and oust them on the basis of the Schleitheim Confession (which was directed against them) nor even on the basis of some word from Scripture, but rather on the basis of the spiritual discernment of the meeting. He first quotes the classic text on faithful church attendance, Hebrews 10:25, with the interesting interpolation of "the breaking of bread," and suggests that in the common experience of prayer and worship they will find the necessary basis for their judgment in this question of discipline:

Forget not to assemble yourselves together, but give diligence that you constantly meet together, and be united in prayer for all men, and in breaking of bread; and this with the more diligence, because the day of the Lord is approaching. Heb. 10:25. In this assembling you will make mani-

fest the hearts of the false brethren, and will speedily rid yourselves of them.

This way of "discerning the spirits" reminds one of the ways of worship of the Quakers, or of the way in which an assembly of Plymouth Brethren might act today.

It is clear from this survey that Sattler's use of language with a strong spiritualistic flavor is no mere accident, but that it reflects his essential conception of the living principle of Christian life, both individual and corporate. We may summarize this by saying that in Michael Sattler's view the Christian has received from God, as a priceless gift, the light of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit opens his eyes so he can understand what is necessary for salvation, and can discern between right and wrong. The same Holy Spirit is given to guide the church, and the church consequently, both in its witness and extension through the world, and in its inner life and discipline, is led by this providential and sure light of the Spirit.

Having noticed the "spiritualistic" tendency of Michael Sattler it is proper for us to proceed immediately to one further remark: about half of the space in this letter is devoted to ethical exhortation. The pleas for excommunication are given a background of indirect arguments of a Scriptural-ethical nature: a long passage on the necessity of suffering, another concerning love and against pride, another filled with miscellaneous counsel. What remains is the passage at the opening, which describes the illumination, the paragraph in the middle of the letter, describing the circumstances of the writing, and a long apocalyptic quotation toward the end, which we will consider presently. As we follow the Anabaptist vision through the *Martyrs' Mirror* it is important that we recognize this double aspect, for alongside the pneumatic language and experience runs a solid strain of ethical obligation, from the first Swiss accounts on.

The Protestant mind is disturbed in the presence of this thoroughgoing ethical conscience, because law equals legalism in the mind of the Reformation. Beatrice Jenny's comment is characteristically Protestant: "Here lies the real weakness of the Anabaptist position, . . . that a new law assumes the place of the commandment of love." Miss Jenny was led to write this after a study of the Schleitheim articles, it is true, and not after reading this letter, and this must account in part for the tenor of her criticism. And yet the letter shows that to single out the ethical element and make

the criticism of legalism is to ignore one half of the data. There would be as much justification to include the Anabaptist vision in the line of succession of the "spiritualists" such as the mystics and the Quakers, as there is to include them in the line of legalism, from monasticism on. If our estimate of Anabaptism is to avoid oversimplification it must take into account the profoundly pneumatic statements that stand side by side with the ethical element.

Next to the pneumatic and the ethical motifs in the letter we must mention the apocalyptic-eschatological. Just as the first paragraph after the greeting and salutation at the opening is a thoroughly "spiritualistic" passage, so the last paragraph before the closing greetings and benediction is a rather lengthy quotation of apocalyptic texts from the apocryphal "fourth" (second) Esdras:

> Finally, beloved brethren and sisters, sanctify yourselves for Him that has made you holy, and hear what Esdras says: Look for your shepherd, he shall give you everlasting rest: for he is nigh at hand, that shall come at the end of the world. Be ready to the reward of the kingdom. . . . Flee the shadow of this world. . . . Arise up and stand, behold the number of those that be sealed in the feast of the Lord; which are departed from the shadow of the world and have received glorious garments of the Lord. Take thy number, O Sion, and shut up those of thine that are clothed in white, which have fulfilled the law of the Lord. The number of thy children who thou longedst for is fulfilled. . . . I Esdras saw upon the mount Sion a great people whom I could not number, and they all praised the Lord with songs. And in the midst of them there was a young man of a high stature, taller than all the rest, and upon every one of their heads he set crowns, and was more exalted, which I marveled at greatly. So I asked the angel, and said, Sir, what are these? He answered and said unto me, These be they that have put off the mortal clothing and put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God: now are they crowned and receive palms. Then said I unto the angel, What young person is it that crowneth them and giveth them palms in their hands? So he answered and said unto me, It is the Son of God, whom they have confessed in the world. Then I began greatly to commend them that stood so stiffly for the name of the Lord.

The essential point of this passage, in relation to the purpose of the letter, is to urge faithfulness and encourage those that may be called to bear the cross "for the name of the Lord." The note of urgency, of imminence, and of the nearness of the kingdom, which these apocalyptic expressions carry, is the explicit form of the dynamic quality implicit in the pneumatic piety of the rest of the letter. "He is nigh at hand . . . Be ready to the reward of the kingdom . . . Arise up and stand . . ." these phrases are the very opposite of a passive attitude in the Christian life, they are expressions of an active piety, and they are consistent with the pneumatic basis and the ethical expression of the Anabaptist vision. Already

in the opening words, Sattler's thoughts rise from the polite words to reflections on the signs of the times:

I can not forget you; though I am not present with the body I continually care for and watch over you, as my fellow members, lest the body be taken away, and the whole body with all its members be overwhelmed with sorrow, especially at this time, when the ferocity of the ravening wolf has risen to such a pitch, and increases in power, so that he has aroused even me to fight against him; but eternal praise be to God, its head is completely broken, and I hope that his whole body shall soon be no more, as it is written.

And after the paragraph explaining the circumstances of his writing, he speaks in a similar way:

Pray that reapers may be constrained into the harvest; for the time of threshing is nigh at hand. Luke 10:2. The abomination of desolation is manifest among you; the chosen servants and handmaidens of God are marked with the name of their father on their foreheads.

The sense of active conflict could not be more clear. Just as Sattler is not passive in his reception of the gift of grace, he is also not passive in his attitude while imprisoned: he is not just enduring suffering, he is still actively fighting the Beast: "he has aroused even me to fight against him." In his statement on the purpose of the letter he says, "I deemed it necessary to stir you up by this admonition, to follow after us in the divine warfare."

Neither the scattered apocalyptic phrases, nor the lengthier apocalyptic quotation at the end represent any scheme or eschatological "plan." The statements of Sattler are strictly "existential"; they describe and interpret the situation he is in, but do not attempt to fit into a general or absolute design of future history. "The world rises up against those who are delivered from its error," this is Sattler's experience, as he was persecuted not for crimes but for having found the truth, and he draws the conclusion easily: "therefore it will be necessary that the day of the Lord do not tarry." (Rev. 13:16).

Our study of Michael Sattler's letter has shown that the three main elements that enter into the constitution of his outlook are, the pneumatic, the ethical and the eschatological. One might use the words of Paul (Titus 2:11-14) as a summary of Michael Sattler's conception:

The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,

who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

As it happens, this is the text with which the Schleitheim confession closes.

We would be doing violence to the unity of Sattler's conception if we singled out only one element as the representative theme of his teaching. His pneumatic language is evident, yet it would be a mistake to conclude, for instance, that he is pneumatic and not literalist, because his own statement: "Let no man remove you from the foundation which is laid through the letter of the holy Scriptures," even though it occurs only once in the letter, and finds very little echo elsewhere in it, is nevertheless exceedingly clear and categorical. In Sattler's mind there is no conflict between living in the light of the Spirit and living by the word of the Scriptures. In the same way it would be false to conclude that because Sattler, and apparently also the congregation at Horb, was so strongly pneumatic, he or they therefore represent an individualistic type of religion. The Spirit must guide them, among other things, to identify the "false brethren" to lead to their excommunication. Excommunication is not antithetical to this spirituality, even though it is directly contrary to the principle of radical individualism. There is no conflict in Sattler's mind between the ideal of the "spiritual" church, and that of the church "without spot or wrinkle." On the contrary this letter would seem to indicate that "pure" and "spiritual," as terms to describe a church, are perfectly synonymous to Sattler.

Finally, we cannot fail to notice that the doctrine which Sattler is proposing in this letter is not qualitatively different from that of his opponents, but differs only, we might say, in quantity. He does not attack the principle of "illumination" but rather gives the impression that he possesses it himself. On the other hand, Sattler can only be called a "Biblicist" if that word is defined in a special way. We can say that Michael Sattler is an orthodox spiritualist, he is Scriptural in his ethics; his theology, as far as he can be said to have one, is Scriptural, colored with a live sense of apocalyptic imminence; and in his mind all these elements exist together in a harmonious synthesis, without contradiction or paradox.

## The Earliest Testimonies 1527-29 (South)

The names we find in the first group of South German and Swiss martyrs are these: Felix Manz, Zürich 1527 (erroneously

given as 1526 by van Braght), Michael Sattler, erroneously given as Ensisheim 1527, Leonhard Schoener (probably Schiemer), Rothenburg 1528, Hans Schlaeffer (probably Schlaffer), Schwatz, Inn Valley 1528, Hans Langenmantel, "Germany" 1529, and George Blaurock, Clausen, Adige Valley, 1529. Geographically and chronologically these men are in close proximity to Michael Sattler. Consequently the main themes we find in their testimonies are not substantially different from those already noticed in Michael Sattler's letter. But a survey of these men's testimonies and prayers will help us to round out our picture of the Anabaptism of this time and region, if only by adding their personal variations to the basic themes.

In the first place, the concept of salvation as a gift, a work of grace, continues to shine through all these statements, and the terminology preferred for the description of salvation is that of revelation, or illumination. So Felix Manz says, "I praise thee, O Lord Christ from heaven, . . . thou whom God has sent me as a Savior, and for an example and a light. . . ."—a phrase in which the thought of light and example is intended as an apposition to explain "Savior," as is shown by the last sentence in the paragraph, ". . . hence so many who do not have this in truth are deceived by a vain opinion." Another statement by Manz conveys the same idea of salvation, understood primarily in terms of revelation of the love of God and the gift of the Holy Spirit:

> Whenever a person brings forth genuine fruits of repentance, the heaven of eternal joys is, through grace, purchased and obtained for him by Christ, through the shedding of His innocent blood, which He so willingly poured out, thereby showing us His love, and enduing us with the power of His Spirit, and whoever receives and uses it grows and is made perfect in God.

A similar thought is expressed by these words of Schoener,

> We call upon Thee, without ceasing, through Christ Thy Son, our Lord, whom Thou, out of pure grace, hast given us for our consolation, and who has prepared and made known to us the narrow path and the way unto eternal life. Matt. 7.

Hans Langenmantel in his prayer expresses the same attitude on grace, and his language is dominated by the figure of fire and light, a figure that suggests revelation more than atonement:

> Hold us with Thy right hand, for Thou art our strength; fight the battle for us (Ex. 14:14), and watch over us in our distress, that we may stand in the conflict, and not go back when it is at its height. . . . Let us enjoy Thy faithfulness which Thou hast shown us through Thy Son Jesus Christ,

and in order that we may always earnestly contemplate this, send us Thy Holy Spirit, and kindle in us the fire of the divine love. . . . To this end, O God, let the light of Thy divine glory illuminate us, that we may walk in it. . . . In Thee there is no darkness . . . but Thou art the eternal light, which penetrates the darkness, that we may no longer be children of the night but children of the day. Watch over us with Thy Holy Spirit and teach us thus to go on in this light with delight and joy according to Thy divine nature.

George Blaurock almost repeats the very words, describing the cross of Christ as a revelation of God's "faithfulness" and love:

We cry to Thee through Christ, for the sake of His bitter suffering (Isa. 53), in which we recognize Thy faithfulness and love; and this consoles us on our pilgrimage.

The clearest statement of a high concept of grace is undoubtedly what we find in George Blaurock's two testimonies, which are really two prayers. The first of these is almost a hymn to the pure grace of God: it consists of three paragraphs, the first describes the grace of God as Blaurock has experienced it in his own life, the second paragraph describes the operation of grace during his trial, and the last prays that the same grace may assist him to the very end, assured that this will not fail. A few lines quoted from the first paragraph will suffice to give an idea of the tone of Blaurock's faith:

Lord God, I will praise Thee now and until my end: because Thou hast given me faith, by which I have learned to know Thee. Thou sendest to me Thy divine Word, which I am able to find and perceive that it is from pure grace. From Thee, O God, have I received it as Thou knowest. . . . My heart rejoices because I know Thy will. . . .

These quotations suffice to show that in the minds of all of these earliest Swiss and South German Anabaptists the essential element of the Christian life was a gift received from God, "according to his divine nature," and not a kind of moralism. There are ethical overtones in these testimonies, but there is an essential difference between them and Sattler's letter, because he was giving admonition to fellow members in a precise situation, whereas the other testimonies are written more in the manner of simple communications for someone outside. The ethical references made in the light of this strong consciousness of grace tend to suggest that ethical living is the way for the Christian not to lose what he has received, as Blaurock prays,

. . . O Lord, give us true love so to walk that when we come we will not find the door closed, as was the case with the foolish virgins. . . . Therefore,

O Zion, thou holy church of God, see that thou hold fast unto the end that which thou hast received, and keep thyself unspotted from sin, and thou shalt, through grace, receive the eternal crown.

There is little variation between one testimony and another on the subject of grace. There is more in the language they use to state their eschatological consciousness. Here we have variety of such a kind that we are convinced that there was not a uniform "system of prophetic interpretation" held by all. In fact, no one presents even the elements of such a system. The brief letter by Felix Manz has no eschatological references at all, unless the phrase "these latter days" be given eschatological force. We have seen the eschatological note of Michael Sattler's letter, written the same year. Leonhard Schoener, or Schiemer, comes as close as anyone to giving an outline of historic-apocalyptic development, yet the statements he makes have to do with explaining the present by the past, and the future is left undescribed. The eschatological note enters as he attributes special significance to the present moment:

We beseech Thee . . . hear our complaint; for great distress and affliction prevails, and pride has entered into Thy heritage. And with it many supposed Christians have joined and thus set up the abomination of desolation. Matt. 24:15. They rage and destroy the sanctuary of the Christians. They have trampled it under foot, and the abomination of desolation is worshiped as God. II Thess. 2:4. . . . And now that we remain as a little flock, they have driven us with reproach and disgrace into every country. . . . They make the world too small for us. . . .

The church has fallen, invaded by unbelievers, and has become a monster that persecutes Christians. But this can not abide forever:

O Lord, how long wilt Thou be silent with regard to this? How long wilt Thou not judge the blood of Thy saints? . . . But he that hopes in Thee shall never be confounded.

That is as far as Schoener ventures to estimate the future. Schlaeffer essentially expresses the same view, but emphasizes the imminence more strongly:

O God . . . have compassion upon us, and send us poor children faithful shepherds and stewards of Thy gifts, that all human doctrine may be rooted out; for it is time to truly repent and forsake evil, for the severe judgment of God is at hand.

And again, further on,

It is in truth not otherwise, than that judgment must first begin at the house of God. I Pet. 4:17. Thus the holy Scripture is now fulfilled, so that

the punishment with which the world is to be visited is ready and at hand: hence no one ought to be negligent, for the sword is drawn, the bow is bent, the arrow is laid upon it, and aim is taken.

George Blaurock uses a number of figurative expressions taken from apocalyptic passages of the Old and New Testament, but with rather less sense of cataclysmic imminence.

All of these testimonies to the eschatological consciousness of the first Anabaptists agree in their conclusion more than in the details of exposition. There are two main lines of reasoning followed to explain the present with its persecutions. One follows the figure of I Peter 4:17, and conceives the end as a time of great chaos and horror, which is to be preceded by a period of persecution of the church:

It is in truth not otherwise, than that judgment must first begin at the house of God. I Pet. 4:17. Thus the holy Scripture is now fulfilled, so that the punishment with which the word is to be visited is ready and at hand. . . .

Another interpretation is simply deductive: if the true believers are persecuted for the truth they have received from God, the persecutor can be none other than antichrist, and this is the last time. An instance of this reasoning is Michael Sattler's statement quoted earlier. Both these lines of reasoning come to the same conclusion, namely, that the events of the present speak of the coming judgment and kingdom of God. The thought of a speedy and just vindication strengthens the believers to bear the terror of the persecutions unleashed against them, in the spirit of Revelation 13:10,

He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity:
He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.
Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

The revelation of God's grace fills them with assurance and hope. The hope regulates their ethical outlook.

(*To be continued*)

# LUTHERANISM AND THE VINDICATION OF THE ANABAPTIST WAY*

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## *Rehabilitation of Anabaptism?*

Ever since the days of Gottfried Arnold's *Ketzer Historie* (1699) attempts have been made by representatives of German and Swiss State Protestantism to interpret Anabaptism with fairness; to mention only the most important, we name Dilthey, Troeltsch, Seeberg, Hirsch, Bornkamm, and Blanke. Recently Professor Martin Schmidt of the University of Berlin has added another attempt in this direction with his study, *Luther und die Täufer im Gesamtverständnis der christlichen Botschaft.*[1] As he states in the introduction, he aims at nothing less than a "rehabilitation" of Anabaptism. And yet, with all his appreciation of Anabaptist piety and his recognition of much inner kinship between Lutheranism and Anabaptism (mainly in the eschatological understanding of history and in the theology of the cross) he arrives finally at the strange conclusion that "the Anabaptists do not reach Luther's level to any degree." He argues that in spite of the existential strength of their testimony and of their profound rooting in Christ and His cross, the distance to the church of Luther is nevertheless quite tangible. One needs only to look at the "Pharisaic" separation of these elect from the world, the absence of emphasis upon the Word of the Scriptures, the predominant perfectionism and the centering of their attention upon man (anthropocentrism).

The present study will try to analyze the two most weighty of the above objections, namely that the Anabaptists lacked the foundation in the Word and that they were moral perfectionists. It is our claim that the Anabaptist sources, properly examined, do not bear out these reproaches. If one wants to speak of a "reha-

*This paper was prompted in part by the article by Robert Friedmann, "Anabaptism and Protestantism," in *MQR* XXIV (1950), 12-24, and might be considered as a continuation of the discussions started by that article. To a certain extent the present paper summarizes also the chapter, "Jakob Hutter's Theology", of the writer's doctoral dissertation, *Jakob Hutter, ein Lebensbild* (University of Vienna, Austria, Evang. Theol. Faculty, 1949), which he hopes will be published as a book in 1954 by the American Hutterian Brethren in conjunction with Bethel College. The paper was translated from the German by Robert Friedmann, who contributed part of the annotation.

1 Martin Schmidt, "Luther and die Täufer im Gesamtverständnis der christlichen Botschaft," *Zeichen der Zeit,* 1951, 81-97.

bilitation" of Anabaptism, then one should have the courage to shake up conventional prejudices and remove imaginary obstacles in order to arrive at a genuinely just appreciation of these earnest Christians.

### *A. Is the Faith of the Anabaptists Founded on the Word of the Scriptures?*[2]

Luther had translated the Bible for the German people because he knew that faith comes through the Word. To him the written or spoken "outer" Word is the means by which God affects man; hence he considers it of an almost sacramental character. But the Reformer was soon to experience that the people were taking the liberty of expounding the Bible in their own way. The laymen, who had to accept the text as they received it, interpreted their readings as well as they understood them, while the scholars wrangled about this or that formulation.

It is then not surprising that Anabaptists on their part would claim that the revelation of God in one's own mind is the primary fact since the understanding of the Scriptures is exclusively the work of the Holy Spirit. To the Anabaptists the possession of the Spirit precedes the exposition of the Scriptures. The Word to them is no "sacrament" and the Bible as such is not considered the very means of salvation because it needs first the interpretation through the Holy Spirit. Thomas Müntzer even went so far as to claim that Biblical scholarship is of no avail at all since the inner voice alone leads to the proper understanding of the Scriptures. Similarly, Hans Denck taught that the way to salvation does not lead via the outer or written Word but alone through discipleship whereby the self must yield to the inner voice of the heart.[3] Ulrich Stadler, a Hutterite brother, taught in his tract, *Vom lebendigen Wort und geschriebenen:* "The true preacher has to grasp the word in the depth of his soul. With the written Word alone he would deceive the people in telling them that it is the Word of God, and there would still be no amendment of life. On the contrary, the true inner Word is a power which lifts man high above his own earthly strength and makes him new."[4]

2 See on this topic also the excellent study by Wilhelm Wiswedel, "The Inner and the Outer Word: a Study in the Anabaptist Doctrine of the Scriptures," *MQR* XXVI (1952), 171-91. Also Gordon D. Kaufman's study, "Some Theological Emphases of the Early Swiss Anabaptists," *MQR* XXV (1951), 75-99, contains helpful quotations concerning the attitude of the Brethren toward the Bible.

3 St. Hirzel, *Heimliche Kirche*, Hamburg, 1952, 113 ff., also the article by Neff, "Denck, Hans," in *Menn. Lex.* I, 1913.

4 Ulrich Stadler, *Vom lebendigen Wort und geschriebenen* (between 1537 and 1540), see Lydia Müller, *Glaubenszeugnisse oberdeutscher Taufgesinnter* (Leipzig,

Luther, for his part, never tired of warning everyone of the devil, who loves to tempt and seduce man behind the mask of the "inner voice." According to him, faith comes alone through hearing of the Word. The Fifth Article of the *Augsburg Confession* of 1530 expressly condemns all those who teach "that we will attain the Holy Spirit without the corporeal Word of the Gospel alone through our own doings, thoughts and works." To be sure the evangelical Anabaptists never intended to minimize the significance of the outer Word and to rely exclusively upon the inner voice. In spite of the warnings of Denck and other sixteenth century "spiritualists" concerning a new idolatry of the letter, the authority of the Bible was for the Anabaptists beyond question. They refused to recognize Müntzer and Denck as brethren and they declined to take the "spirit of inspiration" *(Eingebungsgeist)* for the Holy Spirit and the inner voice for God's voice.[5] Most Anabaptists agreed with the Lutherans that faith comes through the hearing of the Word of God. It is not altogether easy to draw a sharp line of demarcation between the evangelical Anabaptists and those enthusiasts who referred to personal inspiration as over against the revealed Word of the Bible. There is no doubt, however, that the evangelical Anabaptists find their "rule of faith" *(regula fidei)* in the Scriptures and not in the Spirit who occasionally might speak to the elect in the depth of the soul. Thus, for instance, the Hutterite brother Johannes Bair writes from his prison in Bamberg in 1548, "But in particular I have great need of the Bible and I wish you would send it to me, for I greatly miss the Word. I am hungry and thirsty for the Word of the Lord."[6] From the testimony of another Hutterite brother, Michael Ebner, we learn that he was converted to his new faith by Jakob Hutter himself through his preaching of the Word of God.[7] How profoundly this Jakob Hutter was steeped in the Bible can be recognized from his numerous epistles, which in their style and manner of writing remind us of the writings of the apostles.[8] In his last epistles to the brotherhood in Moravia, Hutter

1938), 212-15 (selections only). Wiswedel in the study mentioned in note 2 analyzes Stadler's tract in detail, *MQR* XXVI (1952), 185-87. Lydia Müller, *Der Kommunismus der mährischen Wiedertäufer* (Leipzig, 1927) 25.

5 H. S. Bender, "The Zwickau Prophets, Thomas Müntzer and the Anabaptists," in *MQR* (XXVII) (1953), 15 (Grebel's letter to Müntzer of 1524).

6 A. J. F. Zieglschmid, *Die älteste Chronik der Hutterischen Brüder* (Philadelphia, 1943) (later on quoted as *Chronicle*), 73.

7 Hans Fischer, *Jakob Hutter,* typescript Diss. Vienna, 1949, 65f.

8 Compare also Robert Friedmann, "The Epistles of the Hutterian Brethren," *MQR* XX (1946), 147-77, in part. 165 ff.

strongly emphasized that the Word of the Bible had been the foundation of all his ministry and "that he planted and bore his little children through the Word."[9] Time and again he admonished his brethren that in times of bloody persecution they may find comfort alone in the divine Word. "Oh, how often and how much and without cessation did I preach to you for more than two years and taught you assiduously that you should set your mind to hear the Word of God diligently and to keep it. For God may yet make His Word very precious to you."[9] Did not Luther speak to his Germans in a similar vein? Among the Hutterite branch of the Anabaptists it is Peter Riedemann who had perhaps the highest appreciation for the written Word of the Bible. Thus, for instance, he says in his *Account of our Religion* (1545): "Man through faith might be planted and grafted into Christ. This, however, taketh place as follows: as soon as the man heareth the Word of God and believeth the same from his heart, he is sealed with the power of God that is the Holy Spirit."[10] In a like manner Menno Simons ceaselessly labored to prevent his church from falling into fanaticism (*Schwärmerei*) by an ever renewed emphasis upon the Holy Word. "No other foundation can be laid than that which is laid in Jesus Christ"—this Scriptural text becomes the very motto of all his writings, indicating that this basis must not be shaken. With particular understanding he studied those epistles which deal with the life of the church and, like Jakob Hutter, himself wrote more or less in the style and manner of the apostolic originals. He aimed at nothing else than to build his church in loyalty on the foundation which was laid by the Word of God. And this has remained the great tradition in Mennonite life up to the present. It is a church of the Word.[11] In fact the question could be raised whether it would not be the Lutheran Church, usually considered to be "the Church of the Word," which is in need of rehabilitation with regard to this love of the Scriptures.

9 Hutter's last epistle to the brotherhood in Moravia, written from Tirol in 1535, was published by Zieglschmid in a letter-perfect edition, *MQR* XV (1941), 129-40. Also Rudolf Wolkan published selections from it (in modernized German) in his edition of the *Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brüder* (Vienna, 1923), 116-18 (footnote), taking the text from the Viennese Hutterite codex. No English translation is available as yet.

10 Peter Rideman, *Account of Our Religion, Doctrine and Faith* (London, Plough Publishing House, Bromdon, Bridgnorth, England, 1950), 61f. This is an excellent English translation of the rare German original.

11 H. S. Bender in the study mentioned in note 5, *MQR* XXVII(1953), 15, emphasized this point for the Swiss Brethren, quoting A. Cornelius, *Gesch. des Münsterischen Aufruhrs,* 1860 statement, "the brethren were a church of radical Bible

### *B. Are the Anabaptists Perfectionists?*[12]

Upon the inquiry of two ministers in the year 1528 as to how to deal with Anabaptists, Luther answered in a tract, *Von der Wiedertauffe an zwe Pfarherrn,* in which he admits that he does not know too much about these people but that in no case should one persecute these "enemies of the sacraments" with fire and sword but should convert them through the Word. He hopes that in the end they will be set aright from their fanaticism *(ungewissem Wahn).* What concerns those people, Luther thinks, is less the sacraments than the "works," as he continues, *". . . es ist aber ein werckteufe bey, ja, der gibt glauben für* [*vor*] *und meynt doch das werck."*[13]

It is the basic indictment of the Lutheran Church against all Anabaptists that they stood for "justification by works" or works-righteousness *(Werkgerechtigkeit)* over against the only possible justification of a Christian, namely that by faith alone. Behind this argument lies the fear of the Lutherans of a specious holiness. This becomes particularly obvious also in the above-mentioned paper by Professor Schmidt when he writes, "Instead of the ideal of holiness which inspired the activism of the Anabaptists we must recognize the true situation of man who is [in the words of Luther] at the same time just and sinful *(simul justus ac peccator)."*

This is the very core of our problem as we can easily see, for instance, from the following quotation from the Hutterite *Chronicle,* selected at random: "Those two, Luther and Zwingli, have revealed all the rascality of the popish saintliness. They have, however, established in its stead nothing better, but soon attached themselves to the worldly authorities, relied upon the help of man, and educated the people to indulge in sin. No betterment of life could be observed with them."[14] It is one of Luther's fundamental convictions that man cannot possibly fight with success against his basic corruption and indwelling sinfulness. All moralism, therefore, smacks to him of works-righteousness *(Werkerei).* Out of fear of the latter he is highly suspicious of all moral radicalism and alleged saintliness. This leads him oc-

readers." Bender also stresses the distinction of the Anabaptists from all mystics and spiritualists of the age.

12 See also on this topic G. D. Kaufman's study quoted in note 2.

13 See also John S. Oyer, "The Writings of Luther Against the Anabaptists," *MQR* XXVII (1953), 100 ff., in particular 103-7.

14 *Chronicle,* ed. Zieglschmid, 43f.

casionally to exaggerations such as his famous counsel to Melanchthon, "Sin for all you are worth *(pecca fortiter)*, . . . God can forgive only a lusty sinner."[15]

From the predicament of man's nature he sees but one way out, the *Sola-Fide* theology, that is the reliance upon a justifying faith. But this is, of course, more a theological faith than one by which man can organize his life. The Anabaptists on their part criticized Luther primarily for his resignation regarding the transfiguring power of the Gospel, his all too little trust in the renewing power of Jesus, and the insistence upon the doctrine that sin in human life is absolutely inescapable. The Anabaptists by no means deny the Pauline teachings that man is saved by faith alone but they stress quite correctly at the same time that the doing of the will of God is at all times a practical possibility, to be sure only as the result of such a faith. Man need not wait until death to overcome sin. But such doing is possible not out of one's own power but only through the grace of God. In consequence of such experienced divine grace the Anabaptists feel obligated to strive towards the realization of New Testament ethics in the conduct of their personal lives. In other words, they try to lead a life as sinless as possible. This their ideal was often misunderstood by their adversaries as a claim of complete sinlessness. But this the Anabaptists denied emphatically time and again. In contrast to the enthusiasts of the sixteenth century who occasionally claimed such a position no Anabaptist ever pretended to be sinless or no longer capable of sin. They were, however, always aware of their obligation as Christians not to capitulate but to fight and overcome sin continuously. Even if they should never reach this goal all efforts and pains ought yet to be directed to this end.[16] They knew that man remains all his life under the temptations of sin and the

15 Luther, *Werke, Weimarer Ausgabe, Briefwechsel,* 428, p. 383, or Enders, *Luther's Briefwechsel,* III, 208. Likewise *Dokumente zu Luthers Entwicklung,* edit. by O. Scheel (1929), 672, p. 755. A translation of the entire lengthy passage, made years ago by the late Edward Yoder, Scottdale, runs as follows: "If you are a preacher of grace you must preach a grace that is not imaginary but real. If it is a real grace it must take away a real and not an imaginary sin. God does not save imaginary sinners. Be a sinner and sin vigorously. But more vigorously believe and rejoice in Christ who is the victor over sin, death and world. Sin there must be as long as we are what we are. This life is not a dwelling place of righteousness, but we are looking, as Peter says, for new heavens and a new earth. It is enough that we through the riches of glory have learned to know the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world; from Him sin will not separate us even though a thousand times, a thousand times in one day we commit fornication and murder. Do you suppose that so small is the price and the redemption made for our sins in such a great and wonderful Lamb? Pray boldly, for you are a very bold sinner *(fortissimus peccator)*." For a sort of justification of this strange passage see Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand* (New York, 1950), 225 f.

16 Compare R. Friedmann, "Anabaptism and Protestantism," *MQR* XXIV (1950), 20 ff., and G. Kaufman, *op. cit.*, 87-89.

powers of darkness, but they also knew that man is not helplessly exposed to them. For through Christ he has received the grace of God by virtue of which he becomes able to fight sin in all its subtleties successfully. Thus man will be victorious or at least may trust faithfully that such a victory over sin will be achieved in the end.

To the Anabaptists the surest road to this end is the way of discipleship in which obedience and the fear of God have precedence over the concern for salvation. In such discipleship the testimony of a God-fearing life is more important than theological formulae. That is the issue which Anabaptists place before Lutheran Christendom; who could brush it aside? The question could perhaps be formulated in this way: "Have you, Lutherans, not magnified the idea of justification by faith alone to such an extent that you missed altogether the idea of sanctification of life, that is the transformation of man into the image of the One who purchased us so dearly through His death and resurrection?" It is obvious that this stress upon sanctification has nothing to do with fanatical self-sanctification or works-righteousness; the way of the Anabaptists represents rather a new type of Christian life, recently termed quite appropriately "existential Christianity."[17]

Luther would never have dared to launch a movement of this kind for fear of the pitfalls of works-righteousness, legalism, or even outright hypocrisy. In fact he thought it impossible. Moreover, he and his church were afraid that such a way would rely too much upon man's own possibilities and qualities.

The argument implies the charge of an "anthropocentric" attitude on the part of the Anabaptists, something which Luther had radically overcome in his polemics against Erasmus. To this reproach we make the following reply: The Anabaptists never taught that man is capable by and of himself to reach sinlessness and in consequence to establish a new life of perfection. On the contrary, they knew themselves in accord with the Lutherans that natural man is a captive of sin, and is indeed one who can never escape this condition by his own (purely natural) efforts. But God has given him His grace through Christ and it is He who works in man the accomplishment of the good. The brethren are conscious of the depravity of natural man and of their own unworthiness. The story is told of a Dutch Anabaptist sister who was much bothered by her awareness of unworthiness. Menno Simons

17 Friedmann, *op. cit.*, 19, also H. S. Bender, "Theology of Discipleship," *MQR* XXIV (1950), 31.

comforted her by referring to King Solomon who in his wisdom had to be content that there is no human being who would do only good and not sin. And as far as he, Menno Simons, was concerned, his prayer is often mixed with sin and his righteousness with unrighteousness.[18] Likewise Jakob Hutter knew only too well that every attempt of self-sanctification would fail, due to the corruption of the flesh. For that reason he time and again admonished his brethren to be on their guard not to obey man's inherent sin *(anklebende Sünde)*. In spite of all external success in his work he was always conscious of his own weakness and unworthiness. Whatever he accomplished was done alone through the grace of the Saviour who worked in him as in a poor and miserable vessel.[19] And a later bishop of the Hutterites, Peter Walpot, writes in 1570 to the apothecary Simon Ronemberg in Cracow, a leader of the Socinian Church in Poland, as follows: "Although we are not perfect, we yet have no doubt of God's grace."[20] The *Chronicle* of the Hutterite brotherhood records also the story of one brother, Otto Niderlender, who, wanting to stand out among his brethren, claimed that through faith he not only was relieved of the burden of his actual sins but even of the inclination to sin. Since he did not desist from such false teachings in spite of all brotherly exhortations he was finally excommunicated, "because by his contentions he would bring to naught the power of Christ."[21]

Most of the leaders of the Anabaptists taught what perhaps for the first time Leonard Schiemer had in 1527 put into words, namely that it is blasphemy to boast of the saving death of Christ and then to continue to live in sin.

O Brüder mein, es ist ein Schein,
Der Teufel hat's erdichtet.[22]

18 Stefan Hirzel, *Heimliche Kirche* (Hamburg, 1952), 291f.

19 Hans Fischer, *Jakob Hutter,* op. cit., 92ff.

20 This most remarkable letter of 1571 (taken from the *Chronicle,* ed. Zieglschmid, 446-58) was translated and published in full in *MQR* XIX (1945), 27-40, under the title, "Reason and Obedience, an Old Anabaptist Letter and Its Meaning," with commentaries by R. Friedmann. For our quotation, see *Chronicle,* 453.

21 *Chronicle,* ed. Zieglschmid, 478. The case was also discussed by R. Friedmann, "Eine dogmatische Hauptschrift der Hutterischen Täufergemeinschaften in Mähren," *Arch. f. Reform. Geschichte,* 1931, 109, in connection with the biography of Peter Walpot.

22 The full text of this stanza runs as follows:

Ja, spricht die Welt, es ist ohn Not
Dass ich mit Christo leide.
Er litt doch selbst für mich den Tod,
Drum zech ich auf seine Kreide.
Er zahlt für mich, dasselb glaub ich,
Damit ist's ausgerichtet.
O Brüder mein, es ist ein Schein,
Der Teufel hat's erdichtet.

At this place I wish to point out that we Lutherans also sing in the hymn, *"Aus Gnaden soll ich selig werden"* in the sixth stanza,

Doch nimmt er nicht zu Gnaden an
Wer noch auf Gnade sündigen kann.

Man certainly did not receive the grace of God in order that he might continue to sin until death with a good conscience; this divine grace rather wants to educate us to strive after as pure a life as is humanly possible. This freedom from the curse of being unable to desist from sin is not only possible on theoretical ground but is a practical necessity, if we are not to miss the goal of salvation. It is unbefitting for a Christian to capitulate too quickly to the power of sin even though it is easier than to resist it in trust upon the support by divine grace.

In this context we must realize that Luther's interpretation of Romans 7 has been of far-reaching consequence for his church. In it he discusses Paul's reflections concerning the law of sin in our members which forces us to sin against our will. Romans 7:23. He understands this law of sin, which obviously applies only to the "old man" in us, as the normal condition of every Christian. Hence it appears to him as inescapable. Professor Paul Althaus in his *Paulus und Luther über den Menschen—ein Vergleich* (1938) rightly believes that Luther arrived at this conclusion "apparently under the force of a dogmatic prejudice."[23] We wonder whether Romans 7 is not rather dealing with the typical situation of self-sanctification by which man tries to overcome sin out of his own strength. This struggle necessarily must fail and lead to the desperate outcry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Yes, says the world, there is no need
That I should suffer with Christ.
Since Christ suffered death for me
I may just sin on His account.
He pays for me, this I believe,
And thus the point is settled.
O brethren mine, it's but a sham,
The Devil has contrived it. (Tr. R. Friedmann)

This hymn is well known and has been quoted time and again. Formerly it was attributed to Ludwig Hätzer. Neff mentions it in his "Hätzer" article in *Menn. Lex.* II, 230 (about 1920), but admits that there is some doubt concerning authorship. Wiswedel in his *Bilder und Führergestalten aus dem Täufertum* I., (Kassel, 1928), 185, quotes our stanza as if written by Hätzer. The real author, however, is the Brother Leonhard Schiemer, a former Franciscan friar from Tirol, who was martyred in Rottenburg am Inn, Tirol, in 1527. The hymn (beginning *Sollst Du bei Gott Deine Wohnung han . . .*, is reprinted in *Die Lieder der Hutterischen Brüder* (Scottdale, Pa., 1914), 28f., from a Hutterite (manuscript) hymnal. There is no doubt that the information of this MS is correct.

23 Paul Althaus, *Paulus und Luther über den Menschen, ein Vergleich* (Gütersloh, 1938). Compare Johannes von Walter, *Die Theologie Luthers* (Gütersloh, 1940), 249ff.

Although Romans 7 by no means describes the normal condition of a Christian, it yet has been accepted as such to a large extent. Theology has succeeded in transforming this human predicament of corruption and despair into something respectable, lest the believer fall into spiritual pride and the error of works-righteousness in his attempt to liberate himself from the bondage of sin. If sanctification of life would mean alone that we must drown our old Adam day by day or even tame him through "plagues and torments," then one would have to agree with Luther that it is a hopeless undertaking. It is tragic that Luther interpreted the liberating message in Romans 6:6 into an unrealizable commandment.[24] The good tidings that with Christ our old man is crucified and buried becomes to him an awesome law, namely to reduce, break and drown this "old man" in a day by day act of repentance without hope ever to succeed. Thus there remains nothing but resignation to the fact that man cannot possibly escape sin but must stay in it.

The difference in the judgment of Paul and Luther concerning man's potentialities most likely has its origin in the different situations in which these two men found themselves. Paul was above all a pastor and missionary who fought for the reality of the new life and the clear distinction between paganism and Christianity. Luther on the other hand speculated primarily as a theologian. Living among Christians who were baptized in infancy and most of whom likely had never experienced an inner conversion, the sharp break between yesterday and today was foreign to him. But, so we ask, are not these traditional Christians also entitled to the same confidence in the grace of God made available through Jesus Christ which was preached by the apostle?

Of course, any compromise with sin is out of the question. Man cannot root at the same time in two realms, as a new man in the realm of Christ and as the old Adam under the domination of Satan. Luther's theological formula, "Man is just and a sinner at the same time" *(simul justus ac peccator),* cannot possibly be defended. It is definitely unscriptural, as is also his advice to Melanchthon, "Sin vigorously but believe still more" *(pecca fortiter sed multius crede).*[25] Sin and grace cannot be put side by side because the claims of each is of a totalitarian nature and we must recognze that the grace of God is the reality of all realities.

24 Edmund Schlink, *Theologie der Lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften* (München, 1940), 176ff.

25 See above note 15.

What matters to us at this point is the understanding that the principle *sola gratia* (by grace alone) must not be restricted to the idea of justification of man as a sinner. It likewise applies to the idea of sanctification of man as a follower of Christ. It is not sufficient to eliminate "the works of the law" in the doctrine of justification; also in the area of sanctification there is not the slightest room for any form of works-righteousness, and with it for any claim of merits by the earnest Christian. We should become aware of the truth that Christ works in a twofold way: as the Christ *for* us He makes justification available to man. And as the Christ *in* us He leads man to sanctification—as a pure gift, to be sure. The one is not possible without the other. Hence there is no reason whatsoever to pride ourselves in our doings. Sanctification like justification comes by grace alone.

The Anabaptists have always practiced this idea of sanctification in spite of all the incriminations of the Lutherans that this kind of "sanctification" corrupts justification and leads to a new legalism. Already Peter Riedemann replied in his *Account of Our Religion* (1545) to these reproaches as follows: "Now, however, the Lutherans say that Christ is their righteousness and goodness *(Frommheit)*, although they still live in all abomination and lasciviousness, which thing is nought else than to draw near to God with the mouth while the heart is far from Him. . . . But we confess Christ to be our righteousness and goodness because He Himself worketh in us the righteousness and goodness through which we become loved of God and pleasing to Him. For we have no goodness apart from that which He alone worketh in us, although many say of us that we seek to be good *(fromm)* through our own works. To this we say no. . . ."[26] Likewise we find in Anabaptist sources everywhere statements to this point: "We know that we are sinners but through God's grace we have renounced sin and we hope to overcome it to the end."[27] It thus becomes quite evident that the Anabaptists never claimed any condition of sinlessness in which they would feel safe from temptations. A claim of this kind we rather meet not infrequently among the sixteenth century fanatics and with some pietists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The evangelical Anabaptists, however, had nothing to do with such a teaching of perfectionism. They knew only too well that the reborn one also retains his body

26 Peter Rideman, *op. cit.* (note 8), 35f.

27 For instance Hartmann Ammann, *Die Wiedertäufer in Michelsburg*, (Brixen, Tyrol, 1897), 32f. Also Hans Fischer, *op. cit.*, 69.

of sin and that for this reason the possibility of sinning always remains. The old Adam no longer has any right, to be sure, but his temptations have to be fought without cessation and the strength to such a fight has to be asked for from God. For the earnest Christian there is no other way but to remain in Christ—which communion can and shall be so abiding that the perfect obedience to the will of God becomes possible. John 15:10. This is not a fanciful theory but a reality which can be concretely experienced. The history and the martyrdom of the Anabaptists should help to make us ready as disciples to listen to these demands.

We started out with the question as to whether it would not be timely not only to talk about the "rehabilitation" of Anabaptism but also to carry it through in a concrete fashion.[28] It seems that we Lutherans should first rehabilitate ourselves in the face of this Anabaptist challenge. Only too often have we reviled the alleged works-righteousness of the Anabaptists while we ourselves have been all too forgetful and negligent concerning the divine comandment of brotherly love. Over all the joy and satisfaction of justification by faith alone, we have forgotten the call for sanctification of our lives. Thus we must find the courage now to free ourselves from a time-honored tradition in order that we may become more sensitive to the guiding Word of the Scriptures. We should not resist the Spirit of the Lord even if His voice should come from the mouth of people whom but yesterday we condemned as fanatics, rebels, and legalists. Why should not a Lutheran minister, encouraged by the several attempts in our days towards the rehabilitation of these earnest Christians, urged by the experience of personal contacts with Mennonites, and obligated by the study of the original sources—why should he not be allowed to contribute to the removal of misunderstandings and the dissolving of old prejudices? Only thus may we become free at long last for a genuinely just appreciation of these upright disciples of Jesus Christ. Should a pastor not be permitted to perform this service without receiving the odium of a heretical enthusiast or of an inebriate pietist? Recently a Lutheran professor of theology declared, "I am all for Luther, but I do not believe that for that reason I must be against the *Rottengeister*."[29] If Luther is not our pope, then one will certainly agree with this statement.

28 Recently Stephan Hirzel, a non-theologian, performed a highly valuable service in this direction by his excellent volume, *Heimliche Kirche,* (Hamburg, 1952).

29 "Rottengeister" (gangsters), a popular name-calling by the sixteenth century Lutherans to smear all Left-Wing movements of the Reformation, in particular the Anabaptists. They tried to justify it by pointing to the events in Münster, 1534-5.

# A MISSIONARY APPROACH TO A DECHRISTIANIZED SOCIETY

David A. Shank*

## *Introduction*

Before discussing "A Missionary Approach to a Dechristianized Society" permit me to clarify for you, or at least remind you of, my own relationship to the problem.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has laid upon me a compulsion to be an agent of His reconciliation—a means of presenting Him to men. It is a compulsion which I cannot deny or suppress. On the basis of my testimony to this effect, a small (70,000 member) Christian group (The Mennonite Church [old]) with European roots in the radical left wing of the Reformation and a contemporary American rural sociological expression, has sent me to Western Europe, and Brussels, Belgium, to give expression to that compulsion. It is now eighteen months since my arrival in Europe. One half of that time is spent in religious social work with all levels of European society, where I have met dechristianization at its grass roots. The other half of that time has been spent in study with a view to orienting myself to my mission field and to finding ways and means to function as a servant of Christ in that area. The problem presented by the title of this paper is therefore very real to me, and the paper itself is in a sense a result of my time in Europe—an elaboration and more comprehensive understanding of my answer to my mission board when it asked me what I conceived our task to be in Europe. The response to that question was simply, "To introduce men to Jesus Christ."

The problem will be analyzed and studied according to the following pattern or outline: an analysis of dechristianized society, followed by an analysis of the message to be brought to bear upon that society, and the methods to be employed in that presentation. Finally, we will look briefly at the implications of these analyses for the church which sent me. We have then: the problem, the message, the method, and Mennonitism.

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### *Analysis of the Contemporary Situation*

The statement of the question for discussion assumes from the the outset the fact of "dechristianization." Whether it is a "revived" Belgian parish priest who writes of the "accelerating process of the dechristianization of the masses," and the "necessity of the 'rechristianization' of the masses of adults,"[1] or whether it is the French Catholic founder of the Mission of Paris with its increasing numbers of worker priests who entitles his book *France, a Mission Field*[2] or whether it is the English historian Toynbee who describes our society as a "post-Christian secular civilization"[3] or whether it is the editor of the literary journal *Syntheses* who says frankly that "one of the errors of the church is to believe that the problems which trouble men the most during our era are still those of individual survival, fear of death, and the beyond"[4]—whether it is one or the other, I say—all voices unite to announce the dechristianization of contemporary society, where God, according to Nietzsche, is dead. This fact is clear. The church announces it nostalgically, the liberals announce it triumphantly, the historians announce it objectively, and we of the sects accept it—and today ask what do we do about it.

But, basically, what does this fact mean? Dechristianization is the undoing of that which has been Christianized. A civilization can be dechristianized only after it has once been Christianized. Central Africa is unchristianized, the forests of the Amazon are unchristianized, parts of China, India, Japan, and Tibet are unchristianized. But Europe is dechristianized. The differentiation between prefixes cannot be overemphasized. Here are descendants of people who constituted Christianized society, whether it be Russian or English, French or German, the Low Countries or the Balkans. A Christianized society is one in which the total life (political, social, economic, religious) is submitted to a moral and and cultural order and expression evolved from the Gospel of Christ. The word I use is "submission." Latourette in his classical study on the expansion of Christianity describes this process of Christianization in a very dramatic manner. Constantine at the beginning of the fourth century, Clovis, King of the Franks in the

1 A. Ryckmans, *La Paroisse Vivante* (Tournai, 1950), quoted in the *Revue Generale Belge*, July, 1951, 444, in an article entitled the same as the book, by Francois Declairieux.

2 Henri Godin, *France, Pays de Mission.*

3 A. Toynbee, *Christianity and Civilization* (London, 1950).

4 Editorial, *Syntheses*, Jan. 1952.

fifth century, Charlemagne on Christmas Day of the year 800, and Vladimir, King of the Russians in the tenth century; these mark some of the steps of the process of the Christianization of a society. Christianization meant the formal dropping of a pagan culture and religion, and the adopting and adapting to of a Christianized Roman culture and religion (or Byzantine as the case happened to be) usually through military or political or strong social pressures. The power of this politico-religio-cultural relationship is seen very clearly only four hundred years ago in the political formula of the sixteenth century, *cuius regio, eius religio*. More recently, our own century has seen remnants of this in the formula, "a Russian is an Orthodox." Spain remains perhaps the best contemporary demonstration of this fact—Christianization. This does not say, however, that a Christianized society has something which is merely superimposed upon it, that this process of Christianization is totally an external one. On the contrary, it means that the individual in society is literally saturated with a "Christian" point of view and interpretation of life. So complete is this saturation that there is no other point of view from which to consider life, its meaning, its source, its goals. The Crusades of the Middle Ages were a powerful expression of such a society.

Probably the first real beginnings of dechristianization—that is the possibility of a non-Christian world view in the midst of a Christian society and culture—began with the Renaissance which made men conscious of the Greek culture and philosophy, of the individual capacity for creation, and science (recall only that paper, gunpowder, and the printing press were introduced into this society in the fifteenth century). This which began as a "Christian" renaissance and which Karl Jaspers calls the "conscious secularization of human existence" began the process of dechristianization. The fact that there were admitted values in non-Christian philosophy, art, and culture, introduced the possibility of one being other than a Christian in a Christian culture and society. The sixteenth century upheaval in the church brought a demand that men be Christian in a Christian culture, which could be done at that time only through a separation from the centralized ecclesiastical-political authority. This combination of developments, Renaissance and Reformation, helped lead to a rationalistic-political expression which reached its apex for a time in rationalistic revolutionary France. An epoch had arrived when man was going to take his own lot in hand and base it on rational principles. Thus was presented to western man the beginnings of an "era-consciousness," the feeling that this particular

era might be better than other eras past, and even that his own era might achieve a betterment which he himself had before determined and outlined. Hegel only emphasized this whole trend through his dialectic which described the effects of consciousness upon itself in producing a more and more intense view of itself and its environment and the inherent possibilities of itself and its environment. Marx hardened this dialectic and his consciousness into a material absolute or necessity predetermined by history. The failure of this determinism, used as metaphysic as well as method, put an end to the hopes of man in a rational order, and leaves him where Nietzsche and Kierkegaard saw him, before the abyss of nihilism. This is so well summed up by a word of Karl Jaspers that I take the liberty to quote him at this point.

> Since the world, of which we have become very conscious, is not necessarily settled in the condition in which we find it, the hope of man, instead of seeking its rest in the transcendence, is placed in the world. This hope knows that the world can be transformed and thus it becomes a faith in the possibilities of an earthly accomplishment. But the individual even in the most favorable situation is able to attain only very limited realizations, and must recognize that the effective results of his activity depend a great deal more upon general circumstances than upon his own intentions and plans. That leads him to take account of his own narrow field of action when he compares it to the possibilities he has envisaged. Finally even the course of the world—whose global aspect results definitely from no will in particular—is questioned. All of this provokes a specific sentiment of powerlessness. Man feels himself led about by the course of things whereas previously he believed himself able to direct them. The religious attitude, insofar as it is self-denial in the face of the transcendent, was not able to be disturbed by the spectacle of change in a world given by God. Change took care of itself and was not necessarily resented as an opposition to another possibility. On the other hand, the pride of contemporary man, which claims to attain a universal understanding of the world, and to make himself the master of it in organizing it according to his own will after an ideal which he considers the best and the truest, is transformed by contact with all of these limits that it meets into a crushing sentiment of powerlessness.[5]

After Jaspers had written this in 1930, the German people faced the nothingness with this feeling of powerlessness and jumped according to the formula of Nietzsche only to find themselves before a worse abyss than before. And the other nations of this dechristianized society do not find themselves in a better position. If the German state followed the formula of Nietzsche, where are they who have followed the formula of Kierkegaard in the presence of the same apparent nothingness and powerlessness? That

5 Karl Jaspers, *La Situation Spirituelle de Notre Epoque* (Paris, 1951). See page 9.

feeling of powerlessness is expressed so well by a foot soldier in the autobiographical account of the recent war by Sidney and Samuel Moss. This poor Joe, after having been through the worst of the war, waiting only for an opportunity to quit fighting and go home, re-enlists in the United States occupation army in Germany, because he cannot see any basic difference between fighting as a civilian or as a soldier, and he prefers to take his "straight."

"It seems to me," Wagner argued, "that you'd at least get out of the army to avoid being used as an instrument of force."

"You see the war as an isolated thing, Wagner, like an earthquake. You forget that it's only a culmination of events deep rooted in society. Yet you've only got to look around to see that the war is all-pervading. The struggle of man against man prevails all through our civilization. War is everywhere. There's not and never was any peace. The struggle is the sordid struggle for existence. The war's not something that arises out of nowhere. Look, if a man's body breaks out in a syphilitic rash, we know the disease that ravages his whole system. When the body politic erupts all over with war, what conclusion shall we draw from that symptom."

He paused to let us answer. But his words had stirred in us a desolation we had rather lie dormant, and we were silent.

But Wagner speaks, breaking the silence. "If that's the state you think the world's in, why don't you do something to change it?"

Fred looked at him. "Listen, buddy. I've been in the war for four years. I've hated every minute of it, and I've shot off my mouth about it wherever and whenever I could. And nothing happened. I wasn't able to speed it up or retard it—the war. *How do you think I'm going to change the world?*"[6]

This cry "How do you think I'm going to change the world?" is *the pitfall cry of a dechristianized society*, and is that which best characterizes it. In this sense, we as Americans are not yet dechristianized, for our confidence has not yet subsided. But the very fact that we are met together in these weeks to gain perspective on our task in our day in a conference entitled "Christianity and the Decline of the West" is one of the evidences that we ourselves—Christians—are participating in or being strongly influenced by that spirit of dechristianization. However, the fact that we do this as Christians reminds us that dechristianized society is not all non-Christian or anti-Christian, but that there is a segment of society which looks at it hopefully and redemptively —seeing it as the Biblical "world" to which the Gospel must be preached, because it stands condemned, and from which God calls out a people. H. Butterfield says,

6 Samuel and Sidney Moss, *Thy Men Shall Fall* (Chicago 1948). See pages 315 316.

> Indeed after a period of fifteen hundred years or so we can just about begin to say that at last no man is now a Christian because of government compulsion, or because it is necessary in order to qualify for public office, or the way to procure favor at court, or because he would lose customers if he did not go to church, or even because habit and intellectual indolence keep the mind in the appointed groove. This fact makes the present day the most important and the most exhilarating period in the history of Christianity for fifteen hundred years; and the removal of so many kinds of inducements and compulsions makes nonsense of any argument based on the decline in the numbers of professing Christians in the twentieth century. We are back for the first time in something like the earliest centuries of Christianity, and those early centuries afford some relevant clues to the kind of attitude to adopt.[7]

But of what is this society composed? What are its elements?

First of all there is the church itself, in its Roman, Protestant, and sectarian expressions, which faces the "world." These elements recognize in general that they no longer have the automatic option upon the allegiance of men. To a dechristianized society in general, these elements represent reactionary conservatism. It is they who are "sitting on the lid." These who have claimed to have the truth, we are told, support social conservatism, moral expediency, religious opportunism and formalism, and medieval political strategy, and do not in general apologize for their position. Happily there are elements within the churches, which, taking a more nearly Christian view of social, political, and economic questions, are able to draw nigh to many dechristianized elements. But the fact remains that the church which by nature, origin, and calling is a dynamic creative force has been more conservative than creative, and that it has required a shock like that of dechristianization to call forth in our day the truly creative elements within her. Within the church there is a return to the sources of life that is hopeful. The undercurrents of Biblical emphasis and liturgical reform within the Catholic Church, and the whole trend of Protestant theology to a more nearly Biblical position has its implications for the creation of new life within the lifeless clay. (But it is little, and it is late. Nietzsche had pronounced that "God is dead" in a practical sense already a century ago, when the Catholics were creating papal infallibility, and the Protestants were immersed in rationalism, and the sects were just starting to wake up.) Within Protestant circles this has tremendous implications for unity both organically and organizationally. For the left wing sects of the Reformation there must be a recognition that our point of view is gaining ground in

7 Herbert Butterfield, *Christianity and History* (London, 1950), 135.

high places. Part of this is purely a matter of contingency—a world which offers more than one object of faith requires faith-decision. But the Biblical influence in this "return" must not be overlooked. I merely mention the fact of these elements within society today to point up the necessity of sharpening and clarifying our own relationship to these elements as "missionaries" within this society.

Another very significant element of this "world" is its strong reaction to the social expression of the church and to its vaunted supernaturalism. This includes of course, among other elements, the communist wings which in western Europe are a significant political and social power. It is this element which has constantly prodded the social and economic weaknesses of our age, either without offering cures or with offering an unacceptable cure. Many in our day have "tried" communism (see *The God Who Failed,*[8]) and found it wanting, but continue to follow the easy road of reaction and criticism.

Perhaps a more important element is the one of reaction which is seeking a new "morality." Whether it be Sartre and Heidegger with their atheistic existentialism, or their first cousin Camus with his "pagan," "pre-Christian" intellectual climate, one can perhaps best understand this total point of view through the attitude of their influential spiritual father, André Gide, who "made oscillation the foundation for a new ethic."[9] I will simply summarize this position with a quotation from Harvard's Albert Guerard in his study of André Gide entitled a "Crisis of Individualism."

> Gide wanted to be a destroyer of pragmatic prestness, of abstract or inherited authority, and of flattering, self-delusion. He wanted to throw open all questions which men are tempted to consider closed; to challenge all received opinions, all restrictive institutions, all *a priori* notions concerning the nature of man. He had the Puritan's horror of spiritual inertia, the scientist's skepticism of conclusions, and the optimist's faith that man achieves a higher destiny if he works it out unaided. Perhaps his most characteristic gesture is to refuse to profit from the "elan acquis"; from the acquired momentum of what others have discovered and codified, or of what one has himself discovered in the past. The ardently critical spirit thus advances into an always fresh, perilous, and unpredictable future, though constantly menaced by nostalgia for a comfortable and an inherited past. The shadow of Renan and Nietzsche and Blake may appear to hang over this attitude and effort, though Gide sharply criticized the dilettantism of Renan and the pseudo-scientific relativism of Remy de Gourmont. Tem-

8 Hamish-Hamilton, *The God Who Failed, Six Studies in Communism* (London, 1950).

9 Albert Guerard, *André Gide* (Cambridge, U.S.A., 1951), 5.

peramentally Gide was inclined both to mysticism and to rationalism; to destroy both therefore required an unusually severe effort. He was harried as often by the nemesis of every institution which depends upon compromise or submission and which is rooted in ancient habit; the church, the family, and home most obviously, but also all political and intellectual "parties," the Cartesian and kindred traditions, and the elaborate ethics of custom. Gide believed in progress, but where others sought progress through provisional order, he preached provisional anarchy. Like Nietzsche he offered a startling parody of the golden mean. Rather than seek the midpoint between two extremes, man should cultivate both extremes and hold them in precarious harmony. Suppression and fear may paradoxically induce comfort; the comfort of mediocrity and ignorance. But only the most ruthless and most adventurous exploitation can create new energy. 'Descend to the bottom of the pit if you wish to see the stars.' Gide called this a 'proverb of Hell' which by no means implied disapproval. Why did he insist on the educative value of what men normally call 'evil?' Primarily because the 'evil act' is often independent and insubordinate, and sometimes as spontaneous as to appear gratuitous. However dangerous in itself, it promises a possible progress to a different state of being. The lawless individual, if he does not rest in lawlessness, has a chance to transcend himself.[10]

Such is Gide's ethics of movement and politics of evasion. Unlike the dilettante or casual skeptic, Gide understood as well as any of his contemporaries the comforts of identification and commitment, the enormous relief which comes from referring all question to a higher authority. But stronger still was his distrust of comfort, inertia, and compromise. He refused to settle down and thus dramatized, half-unwittingly, the moral and political dilemma of the twentieth-century individualist.

One other element of this society I should like to characterize as one of reaction to the moral and social expression of the church without explicit denial of the supernatural. "I don't go to mass —the church is nothing but a business and a theater, but I believe in God." This voice of the man of the street has found in the past few years a highly respectable intellectual for a mouthpiece in Simone Weil. She was an agnostic Jew with her *agrege* in philosophy, who identified herself closely with suffering humanity and who had mystical experiences of Christ where she "felt, in the midst of suffering and through it, the presence of a love similar to that which one reads on the smile of a face well-beloved."[11] In spite of some of the affinities in thought and experience to the Catholic Church she felt constrained to remain outside the church in order not to cut herself off from mankind.

10 *Ibid.*, 30, 31, 32.

11 Simone Weil, *Attente de Dieu* (Paris, 1950), 38.

This influence is summed up in an article entitled *Sens et l'orientation du message de Simone Weil.*[12]

Men who had contact with this message underwent a strange change. They found themselves face to face with a new order of which they were most often ignorant. The thought of Simone Weil awakened them, and many were those who upon reading her perceived that they had been sleeping and passed suddenly from a mechanical experience to that of a conscious presence. A world wallowing in the mire recognized finally the sound of a pure and authentic voice. A world which was breaking up because of its prostitution of the sacred was hearing it proclaimed that the good is the only source of the sacred, and that it becomes a veritable ordeal to use such words and justice and love. A world that had forgotten God saw itself recalling that it had no other destiny, and that in going farther and farther away from Him it was losing its own existence. The mystic was able to read the account of an inner experience, not in an old biography, but in the voice of a contemporary witness. This voice which made itself heard demanded an attention and a vigilance from all those who heard it. It forced the consciousness to reconsider some new dimensions. It was a woman's voice, not only that of a philosopher or an intellectual who had shared the strenuous labors of factory and field, but that of a spirit open to that which has the values of eternity, in all of the undertakings of the spirit, and in all the relations of the souls with the divinity. This genius knew no frontiers on the scientific level (from philology to mathematics), and it knew no limits on the religious level. It admired the Dialogues of Plato and the Upanishads and the Gita, but in this love is beauty. Here was a genius that went even farther—a sympathy for the Christ that demanded a conformity to His sufferings and to His death, an absolute emptying of the being. The soul, turned completely toward God, having become redemptive thanks to a new birth, was able henceforth to collaborate with creation on the level of the divine spirit. In this message men found a nourishment which satisfied their hunger. The echo of the work of Simone Weil has a fullness in direct proportion to the emphasis she gives to the sacred. Simone Weil is an answer, she fills a vacuum. There is no more timely message than hers. In pulling off all the masks, she places man before his own conscience—a naked conscience.

A final element that still plays a too large role in contemporary dechristianized society is that group within the social and religious framework of the church who remain unchristianized—those to whom the church has offered false hopes and a superstition instead of a living Christ, and an institution instead of a throbbing, warm, and living body of Christ. For example, to have the funeral procession pass by the church

confers upon the deceased an appreciable dignity which extends to all of his family. This ceremony constitutes a sort of absolution for the existence which has just come to an end, a final seal authenticating it in good and proper form for eternal life—which idea is not absent from the popular consciousness. Those close to the deceased find in this ceremony a sort

12 "Sens et Orientation du Message de Simone Weil," *Syntheses,* Feb. 1952, 277.

of consolation to be able to say that the loved one has not been buried in a hole like a dog.

This note from the report of the religious life of a certain section of the city of Brussels, by a group of Benedictine monks, summarizes almost too well the cry of those who have asked for bread and have too often been given a serpent.

I had a very Catholic aunt who had paid for over thirty years an insurance to a society for the souls of purgatory in order to have a funeral mass. So, of course we expected that she would have the rights to an eleven o'clock mass. But the priest asked seven hundred francs. We of course objected, and finally the priest consented to give the mass for three hundred francs.[13]

In giving this analysis of our society I have been at first quite general, and then have become more specific in going to some of the secondhand impressions of various aspects of this society only to dramatize for us that which James Stewart calls the "secret allies of God working in the hearts of those to whom one is sent"[14]—the sense of sin, the human heart's need of comfort, and that which Julian Huxley calls "the God-shaped blank in the modern heart."

The final note to add to this varied description is this: that across this mixture of trends and thought patterns are being thrown the tentacles of propaganda of two conflicting politico-economic blocs, each offering themselves as saviors—both of which in a certain sense stand already judged by history. This dechristianized society exists in a charged political atmosphere so that it can even happen that to have a particular religious point of view identifies one potentially with a particular economic-political bloc, or to have a particular social or economic view immediately identifies one with a special religious approach. Thus the potentialities of one who should be neutral are sharply limited. It is what Francois Mauriac means when he says:

It is so obvious that it ought to dazzle us that these two great empires of the present, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., resemble each other in the measure that they incarnate the same superstition and the same idolatry; scientific technology and economics. The two empires—for they are empires—do not at all understand the order of love where the individual Christian, if he knows how to hold himself to it, is assured of being invincible and of finally attracting all to himself—like a man who in a city that is beseiged and doomed to destruction would have been the only one to have saved bread, and would have received the power to multiply it and would be the only one to know the source of living water, in such a way that none

13 Jean de Vincennes et Claude Olivier, *La Meche qui Fune encore*, 77-79.
77-79.

of his brothers in presenting themselves to him would be forced to leave him with hunger or thirst.[14]

With Mauriac we too are convinced that there must be a politically neutral, yet spiritually dynamic, and life-giving message in the midst of this dechristianized society. Let us look briefly at the nature of the message which must be brought to bear upon the lives of individuals in that society (for the message works in terms of individuals).

### *The Message*

At the beginning of this little exposé, may I say that this message can not be of the politico-economic order of Western Europe or its more intense form in the U. S. These pseudo-democratic political entities with their socialistic-capitalistic economic systems do not determine our missionary message. In saying this, I am merely repeating that which we all affirm, but I repeat it because in practice we perhaps do not affirm it as conspicuously as I do this morning. This political economic message is being preached and there is the possibility that we too are preaching it more than we realize. In a very real sense, we cannot separate ourselves entirely from this system and its message (or at least have not as yet). However much or little we ourselves are identified with this system, we must not fail to recognize that *our* message is not and cannot be identified with it, but is rather its judge. And insofar as we are identified with our message, we too become the judges of this system in which we participate.

If our message is not the maintenance and propagation of this *status quo*—this so-called great achievement and end result of Western society, neither is it the historical manifestations of Christianity down through the ages in their Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, or sectarian forms, whether of the first century, the sixteenth century or of our own day.

The supporters of what I should call the ecclesiastical interpretation of history tend to speak of toleration, political liberty, the democratic form of government, and the establishment of social justice as though these were due to the operation of the Christian spirit in society and even as though the credit for them should go to the churches. I have grave misgivings concerning that form of polemical history which seeks to promote the cause of Christianity by these mundane forms of justification and which really rather attempts to justify churchmen and ecclesiastical systems. The genuine victory of toleration in Europe for example seems to me to have been due to the growing power in the world of secular interests and secular

14 James Stewart, *Herald of God* (New York, 1946).

considerations. The churches seem to me to have refrained from persecution—or reconciled themselves to the abandonment of it—very much in proportion as churchmen lost the government of society, or lacked the power to behave as they wished. Indeed to me one of the terrible things in history—an issue which I cannot be satisfied to evade—is the fact that the Christian church began a cruel policy of persecution from the earliest moment when it was in a position (and had the power) to do so; while at the other end of the story both Catholic and Protestant churches fought to the last point of cruelty not merely to maintain their persecuting power—but fought a separate war for each separate weapon of persecution that was being taken from them. All this is not in any sense an argument against Christianity itself, but it is a serious comment on human nature even as it appears in ecclesiastical history. Similarly, though I am aware of certain exceptions, I am not convinced that those advances in social justice which have taken place in modern times have taken place because of a Christian spirit which has widened the generosity of the more favored classes or even of the clergy (even those of a very high level sometimes) who seem to me to have bitterly resisted the changes. Some of the most signal improvements seem to have taken place because the working classes, organizing themselves as an interested party, had become a power too formidable to be ignored. And if I am told how many programmes of social benefit go back to those of the sixteenth century Anabaptists or those of the Puritan sects in seventeenth century England, I cannot escape the fact that even in these cases the impulse to social change was an aspect of a rebellion against ecclesiastical authority. Sometimes, indeed, as in the case of freedom of conscience, the church has bitterly fought the world, and I am confronted by the anomaly that it was the world which stood for the cause now regarded as the right one even by the clergy themselves.

This statement by Herbert Butterfield is again another way of saying that the church has too often been the conservative force in a society that demanded radical changes, most often in the direction of the Christian ideal, and thus has herself justified the bitter denunciations she has received at the hands of the world. This only reaffirms the statement—which we do not always remember—that the Christian message, the Gospel message is "other" than the church, and becomes the judge of the church as well as society.

In saying all of this, however, we must recognize too that in our own contemporary culture and world, the message of the Gospel may be seen from a perspective which adds to our comprehension of it because we know of its influence in society (with its culmination in the "West") and church (with its social, political and economic courses for over 1900 years).

In its action across the centuries, we may see that the message of the Gospel has resulted in movements and countermovements that have released incalculable creative power within the human spirit and society. It is not necessary to insist upon the

creativity as seen in the art, literature, and music which are a direct result of that message, without even mentioning the indirect results of all this upon non-Christian cultural expression. But consider the role of that message in destroying the dying paganism of a pre-Christian era. Consider the creative elements of the Gospel in the development of Western Europe up to the period of the high Middle Ages; this transformation of a semi-primitive people into a civilized society. Consider the explosive power of that message in the sixteenth century. Consider the influence of that message for the creation of the new science. Consider the influence of that message indirectly for the development of a new India through Gandhi. Consider the influence of that message in the development of the new world. That message has demonstrated its creative forces.

At the same time we must recognize that the conservatism of the church across the ages has not been always due purely to social and religious indolence, and its hardening of religious life into lifeless forms. Rather we must recognize that there is implicit in the church, by virtue of its being a bearer of a basic message, in a very real sense a "given" which does not change, which causes reaction to change and novelty, which produces finally a unity across the centuries, across the nations, and across the civilizations.

We must recognize our message to be then a conservative force. God has revealed Himself in His Son Jesus Christ in an absolute, once-for-all, historically concrete, and personal manner. In the declaration of His birth, His life, His suffering and death, His resurrection, His ascension, His power, and His ultimate return in glory, there is that which pronounces men sinners and the world a slave. This once-for-all revelation presents demands which creates a desire internally and externally to realize these demands. That revelation was, is, and ever shall be a conservative force in the sense that all human effort is judged by its *rapprochement* to that revelation. But it is also conservative in the sense that each *rapprochement* to that revelation is an aid in the preservation of society. This is the salt in action.

But we must recognize this message to be also a powerful creative force, in the sense that this "conservative" revelation (which was a person) has now within Him and through His activity the redemptive power of love mediated (through His con-

15 Francois Mauriac, *La Pierre d'Achoppement* (Paris, 1951), 62.
16 Butterfield, *op. cit.*, 132-3.

tinuing presence) to effect in man (and in society and ultimately in history) that which He demands, viz., that same redemptive love and ultimate redemption. It is this creative redemptive power that makes historical revelation relevant and contemporary, and also timeless. Since the understanding of that revelation and the realization of its potential is always less than perfect whether in the individual, the church, or in society, there is potentially a constant creativity. This is the leaven in action. This is also the validation of the revelation (from a human point of view). The church insofar as it is the vehicle of this constant flow of creative power into individual lives (and only then), is a proof that the revelation was true. And remember that today, perhaps more than ever before, this message is freed of its hindering props.

But how shall the church in a dechristianized society act as that vehicle? What is its missionary method?

### *The Method*

The church as the bearer of that message is required to remain sensitive to the currents of thought and attitude present in society, and must freely adapt its methods to the conditions of that society. We have already examined these currents; now let us see what they mean for the presentation of the message.

First of all dechristianized society does not in general recognize "professional" missionaries, and a large part of it looks with suspicion and scorn at "agents" of the church. This creates first of all the problem of rapport. This society recognizes a pastor, because within this society there are still Christians to be "pastored." But missionaries and evangelists as such, no! There is therefore a sense in which the churches and the missionaries must accommodate themselves to the demands of a highly materialistic society which says that a man may believe what he wishes, but that he has to prove himself to be a materially productive (in the large sense of the word) member of society before he has "earned his right" to speak about that which is "spiritual" or "secondary." It is only as an integral part of formal society, as one who is "in the world"—who has identified himself with society in the modern sense of the word—that a missionary is qualified to bear the message. Here is the explanation for the worker-priests of Paris, of a Phillipe Vernier of the Belgian Borinage, of the rapid growth of a sect like the Jehovah's Witnesses. The best missionaries are what might be called (even though it is

Jacque Maritain's phrase) "a new type of sainthood"—men and women "dedicated to God in their daily calling accepting their responsibility as citizens in devotion to Christ. Such men and women will not shrink from the world because of its sin. They will remember that the Master Himself touched the leper in order to heal him. They will take up again for the modern peoples a task analogous to that of the old Christian orders which ransomed captives and defended widows and the orphans."[17]

Listen to the testimony of this pastor in a dechristianized society: "I have had up until now almost thirty years of pastoral ministry with seventeen of them in the same place. I have colported Scriptures in addition to my ministry from door to door for more than ten years. It is necessary to have the courage to say that all forms of evangelization no longer produce results, except for the 'soul to soul' method."[18] This is one of many testimonies that could be offered by those who have worked in the field.

Secondly, if the individual in society, as an integral part of society, is the means of rapport between the message and the world, the missionary task is best fulfilled and accomplished through the training, education, and vitalization of a "lay apostolate." The task is to train men and women to work and to witness; to fill them with the glory of their Lord and the high sense of their calling as Christians. The most effective method of winning men is to keep before them a truly living evangel.

Thirdly, this lay apostolate must be formed and carried on through a live spiritual center—a center with a library, a study, a chapel, a lecture room. In this center, a twofold emphasis of study and worship would prevail.

This study would first of all include intensive Biblical studies; not because of the current "Biblical renewal" but for the same reasons that brought it about; thus in a sense one would also capitalize upon this renewal. Here is found the truth of revelation, and a solid Biblical theology must be the foundation from which the "missionaries" present the Gospel message.

Secondly, this study would involve analyses of current literary, theological, religious, philosophical, and social movements and trends. The lay missionary must be conversant with his world. If he is grounded in the salt of Biblical theology, he must also

17 Quoted from *Christianity and Democracy* (1945) by E. L. Allen in his concise little study of Maritain in the Philosophical Library Series (New York, 1951).

18 A letter from Pasteur G. Parfait, Baudour-douvrain, Belgium, Pastor in the Belgian National Protestant Church.

let that theology function actively as leaven in the thought of his contemporary world. The fruits of these studies would also become a means of presenting the Christian message to the world, either in lecture and/or publication form.

The worship experience of such a center must be first of all one of corporate worship dominated by the Word, through the Bible, through the devotional life and experience of the church universal, and through contemporary proclamation of it. This is the conservative note of the body, the unifying element across time—that which is not only an alternative to a particular social or cultural crystallization of the body, but in a sense a deterrent to it.

The corporate worship experience must be one that is also spontaneous, Spirit-led, almost charismatic, where in the freedom of the Spirit concerns and confessions are shared and the help of each of the brethren is made available to all. "My brothers, whenever you meet let everyone be ready to contribute a psalm, a piece of teaching, a spiritual truth, or a 'tongue' with an interpreter. Everything should be done to make the church strong in the faith." And, "Confess your sins one to another and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." Here then again is the salt and the leaven at work in the vertical relationship of the body with its Lord and God.

### *The Mennonites*

This brings us naturally to an examination of the implications of such an approach for those of us who by tradition and confession are in the Mennonite wing of the Christian church. These next points I offer as suggestions, but as imperative suggestions.

1. The necessity to re-emphasize and reaffirm the Bible-centeredness and Christ-centeredness of our message, with an avoidance of strict theological statement, and a re-examination of what Biblicism means.

2. The necessity to re-examine our forms of worship with a view to universalizing our worship experience across time.

3. The necessity to intensify our consciousness and comprehension of the intellectual "world," first of all in terms of communication, and finally in terms of evangelization (mostly our witness has been to the church).

4. The necessity to make the "every man"-participation in the spontaneous witness and worship of the body not only normal, but a requisite. This may demand a re-examination of our present practice of child-baptism.

5. Finally, an examination of our relation to other churches.

In the presentation of this paper, I have tried to be general enough so that what is presented would be applicable in any particular part of this dechristianized society. There would be particular applications of this program in a given locality, such as ourselves in Belgium, which have not been treated in this paper. The core of this paper is of course the section on Method, but I have spent as much time as I have on the other aspects of the problem because I feel that this core section has meaning only in the broader context. Further I trust that this shall have been stimulating enough to promote further discussion and suggestions that will be of value to us in our own calling "to know Christ, and to make Him known."

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL AND RESEARCH NOTES

### The Mennonite Farmhouse in Manitoba

E. K. Francis

The earliest Mennonite pioneers in Western Canada built three types of temporary shelters. One of them, the log cabin, was probably adopted from native Canadian settlers. Its log walls were plastered on both sides with a mixture of lime, water, hay or straw, and fresh cow manure, which was also used as a floor covering. More frequent, however, were two other crude shelters which had been known to them in Russia as their Mennonite names indicate: Semlin (corrupted from *Zemlianka*) and Zerrei or Sarai. A Semlin was nothing else but the mud and sod hut well known to many early settlers in the open prairie; it was the usual form adopted by the West Reserve Mennonites. The Sarai, on the other hand, was common in the East Reserve where sufficient timber was available. It consisted of a dug-out, 26 by 26 feet, and a thatched roof resting directly on the ground. The tall prairie grasses and reeds provided excellent thatching, which is said to have lasted up to fifty years. The front or west portion of the building housed the animals, while the back of it was boarded up forming two rooms 16 by 9 feet each with windows in the east wall. Although both types provided fair shelter during the winter, they were liable to flooding in the spring from rising ground water and melting snow. One informant complains: "There was sufficient good timber to build good farm houses, but no!—They had to build like in Russia."[1]

Soon afterwards the Mennonites began to build substantial farm houses the prototype of which can be traced back to early medieval Frisia. Outside of the native Indian and Eskimo cultures, the Mennonite house thus represents perhaps one of the most ancient monuments of folk culture found anywhere on the American continent. Its original plan had been brought by colonists from the Netherlands to the Vistula estuary where it had undergone some modifications. It consists essentially of three distinct buildings, namely, residence, stable, and barn. These are loosely combined in several different arrangements, but always give the impression of one unit, at times even resembling the Germanic, particularly Saxon, *Einhaus* which includes residence, stable, and barn under a single roof. While in one form of the Mennonite house in Manitoba the whole structure is covered by a single roof with a straight and perfectly even gable, thus presenting the illusion of a typical *Einhaus,* in its Frisian prototype the *krüsselwark* or residence is distinctly smaller than the *middelhus* containing the stables.[2] In West Frisia, residence and stable are combined in a T-shape. Other combinations are found in the Hollander village of Poland and West Prussia. For instance, the barn is often attached to one side of the stable forming a rectangle with it, or two barns are attached to either side of the stable giving rise to a peculiar cross-like shape. Here the roofs over the individual units are often distinctly different in height. None of these variants, however, are found among the Manitoba Mennonites.[3]

1 P. W. Toews, "Aus meinem Leben," *Steinbach Post,* Sept. 20, 27, Oct. 4, and 11, 1944.

2 Cf. Bruno Schier, *Das deutsche Haus,* in A. Spamer, *Die deutsche Volkskunde* I (1934).

3 Cf. O. Kloeppel, *Die bäuerliche Haus-, Hof-, and Siedlungsanlage im Weichsel-Nogat-Delta,* in W. LaBaume and O. Kloeppel, *Das Weichsel-Nogat-Delta* (Danzig, 1924).

The interior of the Mennonite house largely coincides with the Hollander house in Prussia. It is a combination of the Slavic *Wohnspeicherhaus* with the Germanic *Wohnstallhaus,*[4] widespread in Eastern Europe. Another Slavic addition to the original Germanic and West European model is the brick stove. Originally, there was only the open hearth and fireplace. Before the advent of the modern kitchen range, cooking was done in a so-called black kitchen, a small smoke-filled room, over an open fire. Thus the Mennonite farmhouse has actually two separate fireplaces, the hearth for cooking, and the Slavic brick stove for heating, both ventilated by one chimney in the *Hinterhaus,* and both fired from here.

While in Russia the walls of the residence were usually built with bricks, in Canada another and probably older type of construction was used exclusively. As in the Red River frame house, upright posts were erected upon a low stone foundation, but the spaces between them were filled with wooden blocks.[5] On top of the frame, laths were nailed diagonally, which were covered with a mixture of clay and mud, and finally whitewashed or painted. The residence and the rest of the building complex were separated from each other by a fire wall.[6] The walls of stable and barn were made of boards. Light for the stable was provided through a row of closely set little square windows, forming a sort of narrow slot. The roof rested directly upon the walls and was supported only by rafters without central posts. The ceiling of the residence was fortified to support heavy stores of grain, while that of the stable was of a lighter structure since the space above it was used only for hay and straw. The barn roof, on the other hand, always showed an open construction. The steepness of the roof indicates that it was originally always thatched although shingles or tiles were already substituted in Russia, first for the part covering the residence, later also for stable and barn. Another peculiarity of the Mennonite house was the so-called *ovesid* (Low German for *Abseite*), an annex to the barn facing the barnyard, over which the roof reaches further down than on other parts of the house. The big doors of stable and barn seem to be derived from the East Frisian *Agterdöör.* They consist of two horizontal parts, each fortified by laths inserted in the form of a cross of St. Andrew and always painted white.

In Manitoba three different types of Mennonite houses were built, two of which were I-shaped and one T-shaped. The two I-shaped types differed only in size; the smaller one was probably confined to the East Reserve,[7] or at least adopted in the earlier days and later replaced by more substantial buildings. The I-shape was much more common than the T-shape, yet whichever type was chosen it was always uniform for a whole village.[8] In a Mennonite village, the houses were lined up along the village street (usually on both sides) at an equal distance from each other, behind

4 This combination, as represented by Schier, is reproduced together with a plan of the Russian-Canadian Mennonite house on page 59, clearly showing the striking resemblance.

5 This construction may have been derived from the *w stlupy* type of the Northern Ukraine where the spaces between the pillars (*stlupy*) were filled with half-logs (*opolky*).

6 This safety measure had been enforced in Russia by Johann Cornies.

7 To our knowledge only one specimen of the small I-shaped house has been preserved on the former site of the village of Rosengart (East Reserve). Up to 1946, it was still used by a Russländer immigrant who, at the time of our visit, had just completed a new dwelling next to it.

8 The uniformity of the buildings in each village extended even to minor details such as the color used to paint the shutters.

a wooden fence and lawn with flowers and a few trees. Facing a homestead from the street, one would find the residence to one's left while the entrance to the spacious barnyard was on the right-hand side. In the I-shaped type, the shorter side of the residence was turned toward the street so that the entrance was from the side. Stable and barn were lined up directly behind the residence.

Although the single roof with its gable facing the road covered the whole aggregate of buildings in an almost unbroken line, the axis of the barn was actually at a right angle to it, since its main entrance was from the barnyard side. In the T-shaped variant, the axis of the residence also was turned by 90 degrees. Here the residence was more clearly separated from the rest of the complex, had its own roof facing the yard, and was connected with the stable by a passage which also served as entrance to the house, and as a summer kitchen.[9] On the left-hand side of the house, next to the neighboring homestead, was a smaller kitchen garden (a larger one was in the rear) and also there was often a separate building housing the summer kitchen which seems to be a later addition adopted in Southern Russia.[10] In the barnyard several isolated buildings could be seen, including ice house, smoke house, a barn for implements, chicken house, and granary; the latter was introduced in Manitoba when commercial wheat farming made the original storage room in the attic of the residence inadequate.

The interior of the buildings and the furnishing also followed a traditional pattern. The front of the residence was divided into the *Grosse Stube,* serving as parlor and guest room, the *Eckstube* or master bedroom, the *Klein Stube* serving the girls and small children as well as maid servants, and the *Hinterhaus* or kitchen. The rest of the house was divided into *Sommerstube,* the unheated bedroom of the older boys, and *Kammer* or pantry, which were separated by the passage leading into the stable. Finally, the *Vorderhaus* served as a sort of hall and was used in summer as a parlor.[11] Of the simple furniture, the *Schlafbank* is of interest. In daytime it served as a bench, while at night it permitted a drawer to be pulled out and used as a bed. The walls in the house were rather bare, except for an old German clock and printed or embroidered Bible verses or German proverbs. All windows were equipped with wooden shutters kept tightly closed in the warm season.

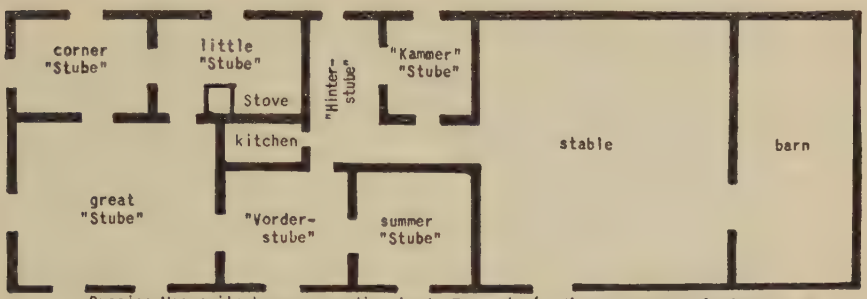
In the East Reserve only a few of the old buildings can still be found, particularly the home of Mr. G. G. Knornelsen in the town of Steinbach. In the West Reserve, on the other hand, several almost complete villages can be seen, among them Sommerfeld, Neubergthal, Reinland, Reinfeld, Chortitz, Schanzenfeld, and Osterwick. The original arrangement of the furniture, however, is preserved only occasionally. An easy chair or even a chesterfield has often been added as well as all kinds of cheap bric-a-brac, while colored calendar prints cover the walls. In many cases additional bedrooms have been built into the attic. Nevertheless, even today, the interior

9 Occasionally the summer kitchen, where also the meals are taken during the fair season, can be found on the other side of the house next to the barnyard gate.

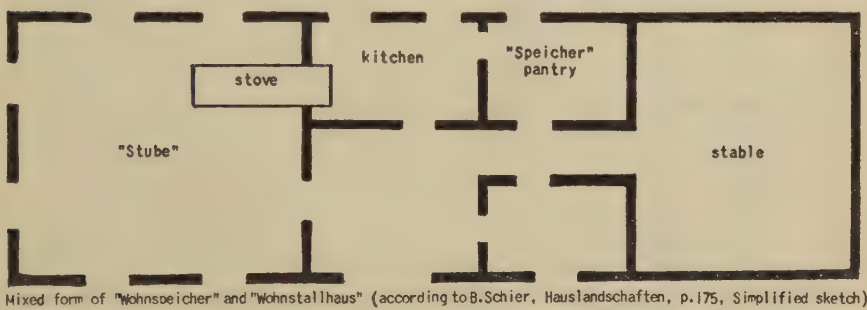
10 A well-preserved village with T-shaped architecture is Sommerfeld in the West Reserve. As reason for this deviation from the more common I-shape type was mentioned protection from north winds and snowdrifts since this village is laid out in a north-south direction. This explanation may, however, be spurious.

11 See page 59. In the T-shaped type the arrangement of *Hinterhaus* and *Vorderhaus* is slightly changed, and the passage between *Kammer* and *Sommerstube* eliminated.

of a Mennonite home has a characteristic austerity, and a strong old world flavor.




Russian Mennonite house according to J. Toews in A. Klaus, Unsere Kolonien, p. 84




Mixed form of "Wohnspeicher" and "Wohnstallhaus" (according to B. Schier, Hauslandschaften, p. 175, Simplified sketch)

## Prerequisites to Research on the Ancestors of the Mennonites Who Emigrated from the Lower Rhine Country to the United States in 1683 and Later

Descendants of the Mennonites and Quakers who emigrated to the United States toward the end of the 17th century have expressed the wish to learn some particulars about their ancestors, their origin, parents, and foreparents. But there are many difficulties in the way of such research.

1. Only a few church books of the period of emigration have been preserved. These frequently show big gaps and are often so scanty in their data that it is impossible to determine family connections from them. Therefore other sources have to be drawn upon; but these too, have their shortcomings. Crefeld has no archives at all from the period previous to 1800. In Rheydt the inheritance book for the period 1670-94 is missing, which would be a chief source for the Mennonites living there. Inheritance books of the magistrate's court of München-Gladbach are extant only in the form of second and third copies, which are greatly abbreviated from the original. Thus there are important hindrances in the way of investigation even in respect to the sources.

2. Even greater than these are the difficulties that result from the family names. Only few families carry a family name in the modern sense; for example, Op den Graef, Strepers. Other names did not come into use until the second half of the 17th century or the beginning of the 18th, such as von Aaken, von Elten, von Beckerath, van Bebber. Here the question arises: what were these people called previously?

Some married into an estate and adopted the name of the farm inherited by the wife. Here the birth-name of the man has to be sought.

Finally there are most frequently the family names which were formed from the first name of the father. In this class are Theissen (Tyson), Arets, Kunders, Lensen, Simons, Tuenes, Gaatschalks.

It is not simply a matter of pulling out all the Theissens and collecting them, when the parents of Reyner Theissen are sought. His father can only be a man whose first name was Theiss (Matthias). But what was his last name? That must be investigated.

3. We would be faced with insurmountable difficulties if there were not available a means of investigation which helps us in many cases to arrive at the goal after all.

It was a faithful custom in the Reformed and especially the Mennonite circles on the Lower Rhine for parents to give their first-born children the first names of their grandparents. Thus for example, the oldest son of a family was given the name of the paternal grandfather, the second the name of the maternal grandfather. In the case of the daughters a corresponding practice was followed. This practice makes possible the lead-name method *(Leitnamen)* by which, on the basis of logical inference, the first names of the parents can be ascertained. Thus, if Johann Neuss has a son Cornelius, he at once falls under the suspicion of being the son of a Cornelius Neuss in Gladbach.

But the names of the children of emigrants are not to be sought along the Lower Rhine but in their new home. In order to learn the names of the ancestors of the emigrants in their old home, the given names of their children with their birth and baptismal dates, and their marriages or marriage announcements must first be collected. The case is by no means as an American assumed who wrote to the author when the latter had directed to him a request for the names of the children: "I am not looking for the children, I know them, but for the ancestors." He did not understand that one is not possible without the other. Family research is a continuous affair even if the first part of a human life took its course along the Lower Rhine and the later part in the wide expanses of the New World. And so if the ancestors of the emigrants are to be investigated along the Lower Rhine then first of all the later connection must be known from American sources. What sources are at our disposal? Are there Mennonite-Quaker church books of that time? Then they should be used verbatim because precisely the way the words are put together—indeed, even a crossed out spot—often gives valuable pointers to the research scholar. But if there are no church books, then private sources must be disclosed which have already been used in part by American research scholars. For example entries in family Bibles such as we have for Johann Lücken.

The results of the investigation made by such American scholars as Seidensticker and Pennypacker are so contradictory that one can dispense with them in the first inquiry if it is possible to find the original sources. What has been written about the ancestry of the immigrants and their family relationships can in many cases not stand up under extensive critical investigations.

And so first of all it is necessary to furnish the researcher on the Lower Rhine reports on all available information concerning the families of the emigrants of the period of 1683-1730 (approximately), which can be turned up in North America, to make it possible for him to find the information on the ancestors of the emigrants of 1683 and later.

Following are the families involved:

1. Op den Graef
2. Leonhard Arets
3. Thones Kunders
4. Reiner Theissen (Tyson)
5. Strepers
6. Jan Lensen
7. Kuirlis
8. Siemens
9. Joh. Bleichers
10. Abr. Tuenes
11. Herm. Dohr
12. van Bebber
13. Pannebecker
14. Wilh. Rittinghuysen
15. Kuster
16. van Loevenich
17. Neuss (Newes)
18. Seelen
19. Hosters
20. Krey
21. Gaatschalks
22. Schumacher
23. Kluempges
24. Klinken
25. Gerhard Henrichs
26. David Scherkges
27. Hermann von Bom
    Cornelius Bom

Crefeld, Germany

*Wilhelm Niepoth.*

## Some Periodical Articles Concerning Anabaptists and Mennonites Located in Non-Mennonite Periodicals

### *Introduction*

The material on Mennonite history and doctrine which has appeared in Mennonite periodicals is well known to Mennonite scholars and for the most part is accessible in the several Mennonite historical libraries in America. The *Mennonite Quarterly Review* has recently (January 1952) published an excellent index to the rich contents of its first twenty-five years of publication (1927-1951). *The Mennonite, Gospel Herald,* and *Mennonite Life* have for the past several years published annual indexes.

The many articles on Mennonite topics which have appeared in non-Mennonite periodicals are neither known nor accessible in the same manner as those in Mennonite periodicals. There are innumerable articles of varying length and reliability hidden in the myriad of scholarly and general periodicals. These range from scholarly treatments of minute phases of Mennonite history located in obscure German journals to hurriedly written articles on "peculiar" Mennonite customs which appeared in the Sunday feature section of an American newspaper.

The following list intends to be only a sample of periodical articles concerning Mennonites and allied groups that have appeared in non-Mennonite periodicals. The twentieth-century United States periodicals of general importance have been indexed in the Wilson periodical indexes. Many European periodicals are indexed in *Bibliographie der deutschen Zeitschriftenliteratur* and *Bibliographie der fremdsprachigen Zeitschriftenliteratur.* However, it is not possible for either to index all of the periodicals in their respective areas. To supplement these individual aids one must search individual periodical indexes, subject bibliographies and a host of other bibliographic devices and lists. The writer investigated more than 120 sources for the list of articles given below. These periodicals were mostly for the period since 1850, but several covered the previous and earlier centuries.

The general arrangement of the material is by subjects listed in chronological and geographical order. Within each subject division the articles are listed alphabetically by author. This arrangement has evolved from suggestions made by Dr. R. L. Kilgour, Professor of Library Science at the

University of Michigan, who has advised me in this project, Dr. Cornelius Krahn, Director of the Mennonite Historical Library of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, and Mr. Nelson Springer, Librarian of the Mennonite Historical Library at Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana.

The author does not claim that his list of 1500 articles is complete. It is merely what one person found in one of the great American libraries (University of Michigan) in the space of one month. That there are many articles which have eluded the searches of the compiler cannot be denied. It should rather be considered as a first attempt. Only a selection of about 100 articles chosen at random are listed here. This is approximately 6% of the total number of references found. Short newspaper articles are not included in the following list. The entire list of 1500 articles is on file in the Bluffton College Library.

## SELECTED PERIODICAL ARTICLES CONCERNING ANABAPTISTS AND MENNONITES

### I. REFORMATION. 1518-50.

#### *A. Münster kingdom.*

Keller, Ludwig. "Zur Geschichte d. Wiedertäufer nach d. Untergang d. Münstersch. Königsreich, *"Westdeutsche Zeitschrift f. Geschichte u. Kunst I* (1882), 429-68.

Plassman, J. O. "D. Münsterschen Wiedertäufer Zerstörer d. Volkstums? *D. Heimat* (Later *Westfal. Heimat.* Still later *Heimat u. Reich.*) 1935, pp. 224-9.

Thelemann, O. "D. Wiedertäufer in Münster," *Daheim,* XVII (1881), 556-9.

#### *B. Thomas Münzer.*

Friedmann, Robert. "Über Thomas Münzer," *Mitt. öster. Inst.,* XLVII, 90-97.

Jammers, E. "Thomas Münzers deutsche evangelische Messen," *Arch. Reformationsgesch.,* XXXI, 121-8.

Merbach, P. A. "Thomas Müntzer in Drama u. Roman," *Geschichtsblätter Mühlhausen,* XXXI (1932), 89-120.

#### *C. Holland.*

Gittermann, J. Ch. "Menno Simons Bekenntniss von sich selbst. Ein beytrag zu seiner Charakteristik und Lebensgeschichte," *Archiv. f. alte u. neue Kirchengeschichte,* II, pt. I (1814), 99-122.

Kohlschmidt, Oscar. "Zur 400-jährigen Gedenkfeier Menno Simons," *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung f. d. evangel. Deutschland,* XXXIX (1892), 1024-6.

van Rhijn, M. "Menno Simons," *Nieuwe theologische Studien* III (1920), 150-60.

#### *D. Switzerland.*

Feller, Richard. "Anfänge d. Täufertums in Bern,"*Archiv d. histor. Vereins d. Kantons Bern* XXXI (1932), 105-22.

Vasella, O. "Von den Anfängen d. bündner Täuferbeweg.," *Zeitschrift f. Schweiz. Gesch.,* XIX (1939), 165-84.

*E. General*

Heath, Richard. Six essays on Anabaptist history, published in the *Contemporary Review* (London, England) 1891-1897 as follows:
"The Anabaptists and their English Descendants," *The Contemp. Review,* LIX, March 1891, 389-406.
"Hans Denck, The Anabaptist," *Ibid.,* LXVII, April 1895, 578-91.
"Early Anabaptism," *Ibid.,* LXVII, April 1895, 578-91.
"Living in Community, a sketch of Moravian Anabaptism," *Ibid.,* LXX, August 1896, 247-61.
"The Archetype of 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' " *Ibid.,* LXX, October 1896, 541-58.
"The Archetype of 'The Holy War,' " *Ibid.,* LXXII, July 1897, 105-18.

II. EUROPEAN ANABAPTISM SINCE THE REFORMATION.

*A. Switzerland.*

Heiz, J. "Täufer im Aargau," *Taschenbuch d. histor. Gesellsch. d. Kantons Aargau,* 1902, pp. 107-205.

*B. Holland.*

Dosker, H. E. "Recent Sources of Information on the Anabaptists in the Netherlands," American Society of Church History, *Papers,* V (1917), 47-71.
Hullu, J. de. "Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der hervorming te Deventer. 1550-1566," *Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht,* XLIII (1917), 257-81.
Krahn, Cornelius. "Historiography of the Mennonites in the Netherlands and Parts of Germany; A Guide to Sources," *Church History* XIII (September 1944), 182-209.
Müller, J. "Die Mennoniten in Ostfriesland," *Jahrbuch der Gesellsch. f. bild. Kunst u. vaterland. Alterthümer zu Emden,* IV (1881) pt. II, pp. 58-74; V (1882) pt. I, 46-79.

*C. Hutterites.*

Beck, J. "Geschichte d. Wiedertäufer in Kärnten," *Archiv f. vaterland. Geschichte u. Topographie,* XI (1867), 101-36.
Bergmann, C. "Die Wiedertäufer zu Au im innern Bregenzerwald und ihre Auswanderung nach Mähren im Jahre 1585," *Sitzungsberichte d. kaiserl. Akademie d. Wissenschaften* I (Wien), II (1848), No. 3, 106-16.
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Garner, J. "Haban Pottery in the Brooklyn Museum," *International Studio* LXXXVIII (September, 1927), 20-25.
Hruby, Frantisek. "Wiedertäufer in Mähren," *Archiv f. Reformationsgesch.* XXX (1933) 1-36, 170-211, XXXI (1934) 61-102, XXXII (1935), 1-40.

Lang, F. "Ursprungs Hutterer relig.-kommunist. Gemeinschaft," *Deutsche Arbeit, Sudetendeutsche Monatsschrift* (Hamburg), XXXI (1932), 9-12.

Loserth, Johann. "Eine neue Quelle zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer in der Steiermark," *Jahrbuch d. Gesellsch. f. die Gesch. d. Protestantismus im ehem. u. im neuen Oesterreich,* LVI (1935), 164-8.

Lütolf, A. "Schweizer. Wiedertäufer in Mähren," *Geschichtsfreund d. Einsiedeln,* XXI (1865), 232-4.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Nederland.* By N. van der Zijpp. Arnhem, The Netherlands: Van Loghum Slaterus, 1952. Pp. 263, illus. Fl. 10.90 ($3.00).

*The History of the Mennonites in the Netherlands,* as the title may be translated, is a book of exceptional significance for the Dutch Mennonites as well as for all who have an interest in Mennonite history. Its author is a minister of the Rotterdam congregation and docent at the Mennonite Seminary at Amsterdam.

More than one hundred years ago, from 1839 to 1847, S. Blaupot ten Cate wrote a history of the Dutch Mennonites in which he treated the subject by provinces. Accordingly the first of his three volumes was titled *De Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Friesland.* It was in many respects an excellent work, but the geographical division of his study did not do justice to the unity of Mennonite history, and since that time a great amount of source material has been further investigated. In 1932, W. J. Kühler's *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Doopsgezinden in de Zestiende Eeuw* appeared, later followed by the first part of his second volume which was intended to treat the period from 1600 to 1735, but which remained unfinished due to the author's death.

Very little has been written about the Dutch Mennonites in the 18th and 19th centuries. The source materials pertaining to these centuries remained for the most part unstudied. There was need therefore both for a special study of these later periods and also for an abbreviated, general history of Dutch Mennonitism in its entirety which would be suitable for use as a textbook for seminary students and as a readable account for the average church member. Professor van der Zijpp attempts to meet all of these demands, and he has in many respects succeeded. The book is factual, impartial, well and clearly written, handsomely published and richly illustrated, often with original and personally chosen photographs. Anyone can read it with ease, but it is supplemented with many scholarly annotations especially intended for the student, which give evidence of the careful and exacting study on which the book is based.

One objection is the too great condensation of the material. The author had a limited amount of space, due to publisher's restrictions, and furthermore he had much new material regarding the 18th century. In regard to the 16th and 17th centuries he wished to present a picture in some respects different from that given by Kühler in his much larger work. The result is that some points which Kühler treated exhaustively and brilliantly are given little attention by van der Zijpp. From the standpoint of scholarly desiderata a retreatment of the earlier centuries was the least required, but the volume is also limited as a textbook and as a general history because of its condensed nature. It assumes too much an acquaintance with Kühler's work, which is sold out and will not be reprinted. There is, for example, scarcely a reference to David Joris and nothing at all about Jacob van Campen, the leader of the first congregation in Amsterdam, who was drawn so tragically into the Anabaptist disturbances. The unsuccessful attack of the Amsterdam Anabaptists who took over the town hall and were masters of the city for one night, is recalled in a single line, although this event had great and far-reaching consequences. This brevity is re-

lated also to van der Zijpp's opinion, which very likely is correct, that the influence of the extremists and especially the radical Anabaptists was not so great on the actual heart of the Mennonite movement.

The first part of van der Zijpp's book covers the same terrain as that found in Kühler's book, and to understand the import of the new book it must be compared with its predecessor. In this connection the personalities of the authors are of special significance. The writing of history does not pertain only to the investigation of sources and the collection of facts; it is also a selective process, a choosing between what is important and what is unimportant and arranging the chosen facts in a pattern, all of which is determined in part by the facts but also in part by the subjective outlook of the historian. Consequently the history of the same events is repeatedly written with new and fresh insights. Both Kühler and van der Zijpp have in common the fact that their work is based on a thorough and careful study of the sources; but then come the differences. Kühler stands in the tradition of the distinguished Dutch historians, of which Huizinga was the most famous, who were well at home in the field of history but who were also great literary artists. Kühler's work is written in superb prose, and is literature also in the respect that he had a special preference for dramatic scenes and romantic figures which he portrayed with the utmost suggestiveness. He paints the moving history of the martyrs and the light-and-dark drama of Münster with the resplendent brush of a Rembrandt, whom he admired supremely and whose Mennonite connections he sought with the greatest ingenuity to establish.

The above comments apply chiefly to the form of Kühler's work, but inherent in this approach is the poetical manner in which he, after the most painstaking work in the archives, proceeded to compose a Mennonite epic. It is also evident from the content of his writing. In his youth Kühler had studied the Dutch mysticism of the late Middle Ages: the piety of the *devotio moderna* and Thomas à Kempis; the monasteries and convents which were inspired by this awaking; how the mystical life went hand in hand with meditation on the Gospel and the desire to imitate Christ in daily living. Kühler was gripped by all this. He saw its relationship to Mennonite piety, and ever afterwards strove with great persistency to interpret Mennonite piety in the Netherlands as a heritage of these pre-Reformation movements. Although he gives some attention to the history of the Zürich Mennonites and describes at length the work of Menno Simons and Dirk Philips and all the Mennonites who placed emphasis on congregational piety in literal obedience to the Word, for Kühler himself the true Mennonites were the spiritualists with their very personal, often mystical type of piety and their feeling for individual independence with respect to the church. He devotes considerable space to figures such as Sebastian Franck in Germany and Dirk Coornhert in the Netherlands, whose integral participation in the Anabaptist movement is disputable and has, among others, been contested by Walther Köhler. Kühler expressed a definite preference for the Waterlander Mennonites because of their spiritualism as well as their receptive attitude towards the culture of Holland's golden age.

This outlook dominates Kühler's work and gives it unity and a message. He would say: This is your past; cherish it and be inspired by it. But this outlook also has its limitations. It is difficult for Kühler to treat justly those elements which oppose his own view. Menno Simons is considered inadequately; the more commonplace and less romantic life of the church type of Mennonitism is placed too frequently on a secondary level; there is a lack of understanding for the history and life of Mennonites within

and without the Netherlands who desired to continue this church emphasis. Scarcely any attention is given to their scholarly and cultural attainments.

Alongside of Kühler, sometimes opposed to him, stands van der Zijpp. He has studied the sources with equal exactitude and devotion. He writes with clarity and has an outlook. But his writing is not outstanding as literature, and his vision never dominates the material. Kühler is by far superior as a literary artist and historical savant but then also more subjective and debatable.

Professor van der Zijpp is not able to write in the same manner as Kühler—and would not wish to do so. His style is consciously sober; his vision controlled and in a certain sense held in check. Somewhat puritanically he bans all romantic elements along with all borderline figures. In the beginning of this review I have already indicated my opinion that he goes too far in this direction. Lack of space may have tipped the scales in favor of brevity, but it is typical that this gave occasion to go in a direction exactly opposite to that of Kühler.

Van der Zijpp also recognizes and treats the spiritualistic types of piety in Mennonite history (alongside of Sattler, Denck remains as a founder of the Anabaptist tradition), but the church ideal, which is generally referred to as sectarian, receives full place and attention. Typical of this is the decided and much greater appreciation of Menno Simons. For Kühler, Menno Simons was in many respects a strange figure, but to van der Zijpp he is congenial.

If one takes van der Zijpp's portrayal of Mennonite history after reading Kühler's, the picture seems to have changed. It is actually not so stirring, the people are quieter and the drama is not so exciting. But this picture—typical 20th century in its matter-of-factness—is more accurate, and if the reader follows closely he is stirred by another emotion: by reverence for the sober, earnest people who sought to serve the Lord. Van der Zijpp has a great love for the more traditional rural Mennonite farmer family with a stern "Zonist" (conservative) heritage. He himself comes from such a background. In many instances he is critical of this tradition, but again and again it is evident that he has a great liking for it. Toward the end of the book there is a photograph of a conservative Mennonite woman from Aalsmeer who was still wearing the traditional costume in our own century. Van der Zijpp shows here a characteristic liking for the old-fashioned style of this picture.

Van der Zijpp also views the Dutch Mennonites in their relationship to the Swiss origin of Anabaptism and thus their continuing bond with other Mennonites. The story of the beginning in Zürich is described with considerable detail by making use of the source studies published by von Muralt and H. S. Bender's treatment of Conrad Grebel. He points out that "Dutch Anabaptism" from the very beginning had its own intrinsic pattern and way of life. The influence of the *devotio moderna* he holds was not as weighty as Kühler claimed, although he grants a restricted spiritual affinity between the two movements.

More important is van der Zijpp's treatment of the 18th century. It is hardly possible to discuss this within the brief compass of this review. The influence of rationalism (not only on the liberal wing but also on the conservatives) is sketched soberly and honestly. He shows how spiritualism, which is based on a belief in an encounter between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit and which is a gift of divine grace and not a product of human endeavor, is debased to a view which regards the human spirit as almost identical with God's Spirit. Both the human and the divine spirit are

in this latter conception more characterized by common sense than by emotional enthusiasm.

Not only the Lamists (left wing) but also the Zonists (right wing) were moved by the desire for wisdom and good sense. Among the latter the idea of revelation is retained, but it is molded into an intellectual and dogmatic formula of faith. With this development one of the important distinctions between the Mennonites and the Reformed Church was lost, and it is not too surprising to discover that many of the Zonists joined the state church. Noteworthy is the fact that Deknatel, the pietistic Amsterdam preacher and friend of and kindred spirit to Zinzendorf, is to be found in Lamist circles and not among the Zonists.

Van der Zijpp's book also discusses the entire 19th century and ventures into the "unfinished past" of the 20th century. Spiritual enervation and spiritual renewal are considered, but here the author is very cautious. The historian's own time is dangerous territory because of his own involvement in it. One appreciates this caution, although it makes the last chapter a bit unsatisfactory. The threads are revealed and laid side by side, but the weaving of the pattern is evaded. Nevertheless, one might ask, can the historian afford to refrain from the artist-prophet function of weaving patterns just because there is danger of fumbling the threads?

At the close of this review, I wish to give expression to the hope that we shall be presented with an exhaustive treatment of Dutch Mennonitism in the 18th and 19th centuries from the hand of Professor van der Zijpp.

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*Plockhoy from Zurik-zee, The Study of a Dutch Reformer in Puritan England and Colonial America.* By Leland Harder and Marvin Harder. Newton, Kansas: Board of Education and Publication, 1952. Pp. x, 255, illus. $4.00. (Printed by offset.)

Pieter Cornelisz Plockhoy has been the subject of a sizable amount of historical inquiry in both Europe and America, which, for the most part, dates from 1892 when the Dutch historian, H.P.G. Quack, published the first comprehensive account of his life and social ideas. Quack, followed by E. Bernstein and others, saw him chiefly as a forerunner of modern socialism. Besides local historians in America, Plockhoy has been studied by church historians interested in the "stepchildren of Christendom," notably by C. B. Hylkema and J. Lindeboom. Among the more recent treatments, the articles by Leland Harder published in several American journals have been outstanding for their exhaustive investigation and comprehensive approach to the subject. One learns with a great deal of interest that this promising work has now been capped, in collaboration with Marvin Harder, by a full-length study, a book which has been published as No. 2 in the Mennonite Historical Series (Newton, Kansas).

The first half of the book contains a critical study of Plockhoy's life and writings. The first five chapters present a fragmentary biography, a "skeleton account"—skeleton, because so little is known of his personal life; the vital statistics, for example, have never been discovered—of a career which encompassed "activities in three countries of the 17th century—the Netherlands, England, and America." The sixth chapter, "Ideas in Retrospect," is an interpretation of Plockhoy in "the political and religious setting" of his times. The second half, which consists of Part II and several appendices, is largely a reproduction of Plockhoy's printed writings and some related materials—two English and two Dutch pamphlets, of which

one of the latter, *Kort Verhaal,* is anonymous and given only in part. The Dutch texts are given in both photographic facsimile and in English translation for the most part. The English tracts are reproduced in typescript, and the various editions are collated.

In regard to the monograph, the authors have performed a competent piece of research work. In the first place they have used the diverse secondary materials with fairness and discretion and steered clear of doctrinaire viewpoints. In the second place they have re-worked the primary sources and have been able to clear up some problems and to discover some new facts. Possibly the chief contributions of this part of the book can be summarized as follows: 1) the bringing together under a single cover and in one language of the scattered facts and diverse materials about Plockhoy; 2) the further exploration of Plockhoy's ideas in Mennonite, Collegiant and left-wing Puritan backgrounds of the 17th century; 3) the correction of the opinion advanced by G. M. Asher about *Kort Verhaal* and an application of the contents of this pamphlet to the subject; 4) some new data about Plockhoy, pertaining chiefly to the American chapter of his career. From colonial and legal documents some additional facts have been gleaned about Plockhoy in Delaware, particularly evidence that he resided there after 1664. In greater detail the authors have presented some material from the correspondence of Samuel Hartlib concerning Plockhoy in London. In this connection, a description of the Hutterian Brethren in Moravia, taken from a report sent by the son-in-law of Comenius to Samuel Hartlib, which as far as I know has never before received attention, should not be overlooked (pp. 44-46).

The chief sources of Plockhoy's life and ideas, his extant phamphlets, are reproduced with care and completeness. The translation of the Dutch tracts is, in my opinion, competent. The publishing of texts, however, is no small undertaking. Facsimile reproduction from photostatic copies rather than from the original documents does not seem to have been too successful. For some reason the glosses are not included in the facsimile of *Kort en Klaer ontwerp.* The last two leaves reproduced from *Kort Verhael* are transposed. One is pleased to note that a purity of text has been maintained in copying the English pamphlets; there is no critical annotation other than a collation of the editions. In spite of these remarks, the authors are to be commended for undertaking this task. For all practical purposes we now have the writings of Plockhoy conveniently available on our library and study shelves.

The authors evidently do not know about a third (?) edition of Plockhoy's English pamphlet, *A Way Propounded* (S.T.C. Wing, P1724A). This later edition, printed in 1660 "for the Promotors of this Society," contains a postscript which reveals that a certain "James Shaen Esq." had donated a thousand acres of land in Ireland for the purpose of establishing Plockhoy's "little common-wealth" there. This bit of information makes it possible to identify additional references in Hartlib's correspondence, among which is the proposal that "Lord Newport" (Mountjoy Blount) was ready to give "his college in Northamptonshire for the same purpose."

As is to be expected, the most disputable part of this book is the chapter which relates to an interpretation of Plockhoy and his significance in history. In the first place one appreciates the effort to give perspective in "The Ideas in Retrospect" to the preceding five chapters. Harder—from the foreword I take it that Leland Harder wrote the first five chapters and Marvin Harder the remaining one—is correct, I believe, in pointing out that "the social, economic and political ideas" give Plockhoy significance

rather than the religious theme (81). He also observes that much of the thinking of Plockhoy foreshadows the rationalism and secularism of the 18th century. It is this secular element, no doubt, which has made H. S. Bender (see Harder 20, 21) and N. van der Zijpp (*Algemeen Doopsgezind Weekblad,* I, 15; Feb. 1, 1947) disclaim Plockhoy as a Mennonite. It is important to realize that Plockhoy is a transition figure in the secularization of Dutch sectarianism, "where socialism is no longer defined by religious convictions and where sectarianism is more social-political than religious" (see J. Lindeboom, *Stiefkinderen van het Christendom,* 378-81). Whether one views Plockhoy as Mennonite, Collegiant, or Quaker, he typifies this process, and as Lindeboom says further, "those who joined him are no longer stepchildren of Christianity [i.e., sectarian] but of the state or the traditional political community." Harder sees Plockhoy's ideas and life as a contribution to concepts which today are highly valued, e.g., "democratic rule" (81, 102-4). One cannot escape the observation, however, that this contribution was made in a process of spiritual enervation, at least from a Christian point of view. At this juncture the historian as historian probably has to stop, but hardly without pondering: 1) the important role of the Christian sectarian in society, 2) the disparity between secular and religious values, 3) whether the sect makes its greatest contribution as a "gathered church" or in a process of assimilation to the society around it.

*Amsterdam, The Netherlands* Irvin B. Horst

*Heimliche Kirche.* By Stephan Hirzel. Hamburg: Friedr. Wittig Verlag, n. d. (1952), Pp. 343, map. 10.80 DM.

The subtitle of this book reads *Ketzerchronik aus den Tagen der Reformation,* thus putting itself into a long series of books dealing with the "heretics," the non-conformists or "left-wing" people since the days of the Reformation, provoking a comparison with Seb. Franck, Gottfried Arnold, and others. All these men felt that these non-conformists or "evangelical brethren" of the "Heimliche Kirche" (church of the Catacombs, church under the Cross) have been slighted by the official historiographers of the Protestant churches, and deserve proper attention and vindication. That was what, for instance, Wilhelm Wiswedel did in his three volumes *Bilder und Führergestalten aus dem Täufertum,* on the basis of vast research material. Stephen Hirzel, who is professionally an architect and teacher at a technical college in Germany, had no such high-flung ambitions. He just wanted to write an appealing and popular account of the entire Anabaptist movement from its beginning to the death of Menno Simons. In this purpose he succeeds beautifully. The book is written with warmth and appreciation, as a flaming apology of this "left-wing" movement, culminating in a high praise of the work of Menno Simons, whom he considers the most moderate and level-headed among all these men, and the most able leader who shaped that movement into a permanent new church, fighting extremes and fanaticism (and of course tendencies toward violence) as much as one man could possibly achieve. The book is written without any scholarly intention, no footnotes, no references, no index, and might well serve as a pleasant popularizer, winning friends for these persecuted and so often misunderstood and slandered brethren among a wider public.

Unfortunately the book abounds in inaccuracies and outright errors; it is regrettable that the information contained is in many cases not perfectly reliable and historically sound, being based upon older secondhand presentations instead of firsthand sources. Likewise the judgment con-

cerning the different leading men of this movement between 1520 and 1560 is often not quite in accord with modern Mennonite church historiography. It must be deeply regretted that such a good plan was thus blurred and falls short of its intent. It seems to the reviewer that the author followed too closely the writings of Ludwig Keller, and that he missed altogether availing himself of that rich mine of information found in the nearly three volumes of the *Mennonitisches Lexikon*. Thus, to illustrate the point, many fine pages are devoted to Hans Denck (d. 1528) that noble spiritualistic leader who for a short time was also a leader of the Anabaptists but soon left them, only to die lonely and without any followership. On the other hand Conrad Grebel, the very beginner of our movement, is hardly appreciated; no one who reads the brief account on him could gain the proper picture or could place his activities in the proper context. The same holds true regarding Michael Sattler to whom only two or three pages are devoted; again the reader will fail to grasp the significance of this perhaps strongest leader of early Anabaptism in South Germany. Again Hans Hut—his personality is, unfortunately, badly misdrawn, as if Hut had been an advocate of violence to the end. This, of course, is not the case as any glimpse into Loserth's article in *Menn. Lex.* would prove. Moreover, Hut must not be brought into any contact with the ill-famed "Nikolsburg Articles" which were a gross forgery (see *M. L.* art. by Wiswedel). In the same way, Hubmaier is in no way responsible for the Twelve Articles of the peasants. All those contentions were put forth some two or three generations ago but were abandoned long since. To illustrate the inaccuracies of the book, may I just point to the claim (p. 65) that Grebel baptized Blaurock in March 1525 in Zollikon under the open sky. (The event took place in January 1525 in a room in Zurich). That the Schleitheim Articles of 1527 are called the *Sieben Bundesregeln* of Schlatt might be considered a minor point, but to claim that the first Anabaptists went to Moravia due to the presence of the *Unitas Fratrum* (Bohemian Brethren, later Moravians) there and their tolerant attitude and kinship to Anabaptism is, at least to this reviewer, a misstatement. The events of Münster are rightly emphasized as they brought a new element into the desperate fight of the brethren for recognition and even consolidation; that they had continuing effects upon the brethren even fifteen years later might rightly be doubted. The "revolutionary wing" was generally repudiated wherever Anabaptism went.

Very well done is the discussion of the Anabaptist attitude concerning marriage and divorce, in connection with the Wismar articles. Here the author is extremely fair and his presentation very helpful; even among Mennonites a good many misconceptions concerning divorce are still rampant. But then, why does the book end in 1559 as the alleged year of Menno Simons' death when in reality he died in 1561? And the name of Dirk Philips is missing altogether although the North German and Dutch Anabaptist movement cannot be thought of without the labors of this outstanding man.

Thus, from the standpoint of a proper Anabaptist-Mennonite history, this attempt at popularization must be judged as falling far short of our present-day insight and historical standards. Nevertheless, from the angle of promoting sympathetic feelings toward Anabaptism among the wider reading public the book no doubt fulfills its noble task.

*Western Michigan College* Robert Friedmann

*The Hertzler-Hartzler Family History.* By Silas Hertzler. Goshen, Ind. Copyright by the author, 1952. Pp. 773. $5.25.

*The Hertzler-Hartzler Family History,* written by Silas Hertzler of the Goshen College faculty, brings up to date the earlier one by John Hertzler, Sr., of Port Royal, Pa., who in 1884 copyrighted *A Brief Biographic Memorial of Jacob Hertzler and a Complete Genealogical Family History of his Lineal Descendants."* The new book contains data on 8,775 families.

The present family history traces, in a manner as complete as possible, the descendants of Jacob Hertzler who was born in Switzerland in 1703. Since he was persecuted for his religious faith, being a member of the Amish Mennonite church, he fled to the Palatinate and then on to America, where he landed in Philadelphia September 9, 1749. Some historical notes are given concerning Jacob Hertzler and his family who settled near Hamburg in Berks County, Pennsylvania.

With regard to the spelling of the name, the author has a reproduction of the original signature of Jacob Hertzler appearing in the book, and then goes on to say, "It will be seen that the original spelling in German was Hertzler. Many present members of the family use the Americanized form Hartzler. The writer's suggestion is that possibly the pronunciation of the German form of the name suggested the latter spelling. Those who have kept the original spelling no longer have the German pronunciation, while those who have changed the spelling have kept closer to the original pronunciation."

The families are numbered consecutively starting with the pioneer Jacob Hertzler as number 1, then his oldest son is number 2 and so on, starting with the oldest child in each family and continuing with the first-born in the following generation until finally the youngest is reached in the last generation. In each case this number precedes the listed name. There is a second number following the name which refers to the family from which this person comes. In all families where married children are listed, there is a number following the name of each married child. This number refers to the family number of this child so that one may readily find this family. Thus it is possible, by starting with any family in the book, to trace the ancestors back to Jacob Hertzler and also to trace the descendants down to the present.

In each family the following information is given: name of Hertzler descendant, place of birth, date of birth, date of marriage, name of marriage partner, date of birth of marriage partner, names of parents of marriage partner, place of residence, occupation, religious affiliation, names of children. The compilation is as complete as is reasonable to expect. In many cases other family histories are referred to for information on the ancestry of marriage partners.

Some interesting statistical information concerning the Hertzler-Hartzler family is given. Tables are presented showing the number of families, number of children, and size of families. In another table residences of Hertzler families by states and countries are given. Another gives the occupation of family heads. Other tables present data on denominations represented, ministers, college professors, etc. Finally there is included an address by J. E. Hartzler of Goshen, Indiana, entitled, "The Spirit of Jacob Hertzler," delivered on the commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the coming of Bishop Jacob Hertzler to America. A complete index of family heads aids in making this family history a most useful one.

This volume represents the work of more than twenty years by the author. All descendants of Jacob Hertzler owe a debt of gratitude to the author for a task well done.

*Goshen College* H. Harold Hartzler

*La Guerre et l'Evangile.* By Jean Laserre, Paris: La Reconciliation, 1953. Pp. 258. $1.80.

This is the best book of its kind in any language. There have been discussions on Christian pacifism as a theological position, as a position derived exegetically from the New Testament, or as a traditional Mennonite stand; there have been defenses of the position against the attacks most often leveled against it. But even in English, the language of most of the literature on the question, no one cohesive work has yet united the Biblical, theological, and argumentative approaches so adequately and so forcefully as does this writer. Guarded against the twin errors of fundamentalism and liberalism by his solid grounding in Biblical theology, Jean Laserre, French Reformed pastor, has produced a work of such stature as to demand a hearing from those thinkers who until now have been able to dismiss pacifism as political naïveté or monastic withdrawal. The burden of proof is now with the militarists, for the first time really since Constantine, as European theology goes.

In spite of its general theological validity the book is written for a specifically French readership, combining abundant citations from Calvin and Barth, French Protestantism's two accredited doctors, with potent illustrative material from France's recent war experiences. The work's permeating passion never is permitted to endanger the strict and logical fairness with which the Biblical sources as well and the opponents' arguments are treated.

Laserre's merit is that he does not treat the war question as a separate field of argument, but instead insists on keeping the discussion where it belongs, within the field of Christian ethics, where it is subject to criticism by the same criteria and illumination from the same revelation as are valid for other ethical matters. This point is driven home by repeated hypothetical applications to the seventh, eighth, and ninth commandments of the processes of reasoning applied by militarists to the sixth. Just as important in practice as Laserre's condemnation of war, and more basic doctrinally, is his effort to uproot from Christian ethics the "Constantinian heresy" which ties the church, and therefore ethics, to the Roman concept of the *civitas* as the supreme norm of ethical reference.

Only twice does Laserre come to conclusions which differ from those of the sixteenth-century Anabaptists, and neither of these minor points concerns the question of Christian participation in war. Whereas the Anabaptists conceded the legitimacy of the State's use of the death penalty (*e.g.,* Schleitheim Art. 6: *"Das schwert ist ein gottes ordnung usserhalb der volkumenheit Christi, welches den bösen straft und tödt"*), Laserre challenges it on New Testament theological grounds, since Christ died for all men's sins and since He in His Coming as Judge has the right to punish (cf. John 8, where Jesus admits the Mosaic prescription that adultery merits death, yet Himself pardons the sinner and challenges the Jews' right to inflict the merited punishment, since they also are sinners). Laserre is not quite clear as to the sense in which this prohibition of the death penalty applies to the non-Christian state, since at the crucial point in his development he assumes that the judge or juryman is Christian, which the Anabaptists (less Constantinian) would not have supposed.

The second difference concerns the legitimacy of non-violent, non-military defense of one's country, which Laserre would not reject; although the rigor of his evangelical social criticism makes it seem that in practice the difference would be largely one of terms, since "one's country" is so clearly little different from the enemy.

However these differences with traditional Mennonite views may be assessed, they are minor in relation to the evangelical impact of a book like this. That a Reformed minister can and does defend in the European theological arena the same view of Christ's ethical supremacy over the interests of the *civitas* which got the Anabaptists into trouble is an event of major importance for church history.

*Valdoie (Ter. de Belfort), France* John Howard Yoder

*Seed from the Ukraine.* By Katharine Nickel. New York: Pageant Press, 1952. Pp. 113. $3.00.

*Seed from the Ukraine* is a poor book. It is poor because it is historically inaccurate. In spite of Miss Nickel's assurance that the book is an attempt "to record accurately the events of the historical movement of the Mennonite migration to America in the seventies," it is hopelessly inaccurate as a historical document. These historical inaccuracies are evident everywhere, particularly in the list of source books. C. Henry Smith is credited with writing *The Mennonites of Russia,* a nonexistent book, and C. H. Wedel, instead of C. Henry Smith, is listed as the author of *The Story of the Mennonites.* Competent Mennonite historians will find much to criticize in this book.

*Seed from the Ukraine* is a poor book because it is badly written. A college composition teacher's red pencil would be much the worse for wear after checking this book. It is surprising that the editors of the Pageant Press did not use theirs more freely. Misplaced modifiers, confusion of adverbs and adjectives, ambiguous and obscure reference of pronouns, incorrect syllabication, and omission of periods between two sentences are only a few of the grammatical errors in the book. The diction is archaic, colloquial, and awkward. The Russian Mennonite boys use present-day American slang. Almost every noun has a qualifying adjective, most of which are superfluous or at most merely decorative. The sentence structure is inept and cumbersome. Trite and hackneyed expressions like "boded no good," "bustle and ado," "in hot water," "sorry plight," and "made no bones about it" are common.

*Seed from the Ukraine* is a poor book because it is devoid not only of artistic quality but also of interest. The story does not move ahead. There is no definite narrative thread to hold the reader's interest. Miss Nickel moves aimlessly from one subject to another. The story is held up by digressions and long irrelevant descriptions. It is difficult for the reader to keep interested, for there is no climax and no real struggle or issue to be resolved. Too much of the story consists of commonplaces. Effective characterization is absent.

This book is neither fiction or fact but a confused mixture of the two. It is a series of episodes, some valuable as social history but most of them dull and commonplace, loosely connected by an inadequate framework. It neither furthers our knowledge of the movement of the Mennonites to the United States in the eighteen-seventies nor does it make effective use of that movement to present an interesting or significant story. This book will be a disappointment to most readers.

*De Soto, Kansas* Elmer F. Suderman

*Blue Hills and Shoofly Pie.* By Ann Hark. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1952. Pp. 284. $3.75.

The Pennsylvania Dutch have been the sum and substance of a number of volumes in recent years. At least a dozen writers have boosted their fame by choosing some theme in this distinct Pennsylvania folk culture. Recent treatments have ranged from technical discussions of cultural specialities to literary narrative.

Ann Hark was born of Moravian lineage in Lancaster County and is the author of the rather popular *Hex Marks the Spot* and coauthor with Preston A. Barba of *Pennsylvania Dutch Cookery.* The genius of the author is her literary skill in interpreting her own observations as she moves among the "Dutch."

*Blue Hills and Shoofly Pie* contains everything the title suggests, allowing for certain daring omissions. The subject matter is pressed into chapter headings of the twelve calendar months beginning with July. From the author's mountain cottage home, from her own world of likes and dislikes, and with her "Rat" (auto), chauffeur, and pet "Patsy," the reader is casually taken with this company to picnics, threshing, auction sales, a hopeless chase for the answer to magic mirrors, water divining, hexing, collecting antiques, et cetera. We stumble from lore to legend without following any system except the experiences and observations which happen to have been the author's. Proof of how interestingly Miss Hark can make her subjects live is the combination of color and imagination with which she writes.

"The road we traveled ran beneath the shadow of the hills—my beautiful blue hills that now had suddenly become a changing tapestry of green and red and gold, forerunner of the greater glory yet to come. They separated at one point, and through the gap we came out on a vista soft and lovely as an old oil painting. There before us stretched out hills and still more hills—those hills of Pennsylvania Dutchland which to me spell home and all the sweet content that word implies. What other land can still the heart and fill the soul with such glowing warmth of satisfaction?"

Amish, Dunkard, and Mennonite subjects all are woven into the narrative by various means. The Amish are given considerable attention, while Mennonites figure much less prominently. In the minds of most persons, and some writers, the Amishman typifies the Pennsylvania Dutch culture, in spite of the fact that all Amish in the United States represent no more than five per cent of the total "Dutch" dialect speaking population. From the present volume it is again evident that the "sect" is given greater publicity in proportion to population than are the "church" people.

The descriptions of visits to the Amish are excellently done; in fact, the account of an Amish wedding is the best this reviewer has ever read. The day-long singing and feasting of chicken, duck, ham, and other dainties, leading way into the night, reached a point where Miss Hark says, ". . . My own endurance wasn't equal to the test. The heat, the food, the noise, the endless panorama of perpetual motion, left me groggy and confused. I had to head for home or cravenly collapse upon the spot." The author should be excused, however, for inferring that there are Amish living in Minnesota, Idaho, and California.

Miss Hark has a vivid way of telling what interests her. She looks at the culture from the outside, is not a genuine participant herself, and is really inexperienced in the more elemental and everyday affairs of the Dutch. She acknowledges this in several instances, in particular, when she expresses astonishment at the fifteen crocks of apple butter produced in one

stirring. Her leisure time is engaged in her favorite sport of "getting educated on the Pennsylvania Dutch" and her typical superior manner with Dutch informants leaves this reader with an empty feeling. An example is the sudden switch from cultural items to her "Patsy" or to items of personal taste. The content weighs heavy on the side of *hexerei* and tales. But the volume is colorfully written, for which the author deserves commendation.

A good many volumes on the Dutch have tended to exploit the colorful, the quaint, and the nostalgic. It is time for a more serious study of Pennsylvania's folk culture, to penetrate beneath the surface if such creativity is to contribute toward an understanding of sturdy rural communities and social groupings which survive for centuries.

*Scottdale, Pennsylvania* John A. Hostetler

*The Hutterites and Saskatchewan. A Study of Inter-group Relations.* Conducted by the Canadian Mental Health Association (Saskatchewan Division), 1953. Regina, Sask.: Canadian Mental Health Association. Pp. 132, mimeographed.

This is a report of a study of Hutterites and their relations with larger societies in which they have lived. It focuses its attention on two Saskatchewan communities into which the Hutterites have moved, Maple Creek and Schaunavon. There are four parts in the study. A survey was made of available literature about the Hutterites. Field investigations were carried out in the two communities. Educational articles were published in the newspapers serving the two communities, and finally reports were prepared. The volume being reviewed contains the materials in the interim report, which is signed by Carle C. Zimmerman of Harvard and Richard E. DuWors of Bucknell. In the Preface are listed many scholars and authorities who co-operated in the study, among whom are several Mennonites.

The report covers five subjects: Hutterite society and the process of change, Maple Creek and the Hutterites, relations between Shaunavon and the Hutterites, contrasts between Maple Creek and Shaunavon, and future considerations. Major conclusions reached are that because Hutterites are "different," it is not surprising that misconceptions have arisen; that when the "different" group becomes a social or an economic threat to parts of the larger society, these misunderstandings become multiplied; and that although there are threats to the security of the larger society into which the Hutterites are expanding, the problems are not so serious but that they can be solved by the communities concerned. The authors conclude that the Hutterites can best be assimilated by the larger society through the avoidance of discriminatory legislation, which would tend to perpetuate their peculiar ways of life.

*Goshen College* Melvin Gingerich

*I Must See Switzerland.* By Ira D. Landis, Bareville, Pa.: The Author, January, 1954. Pp. xi, 219. Illustrated, maps. $3.50.

The author of this interesting and sprightly travelogue is one of those happy tourists who know exactly where they want to go and why, assuredly get there, have their eyes and ears wide open and get to see everything they want to see, then write accurately and engagingly about it, and evidently have a delightful time doing both the trip and the book. Such folks,

not being either professional travelers or writers, can miss a few corners occasionally on sea or on land and in print, without being too disturbed about it, and take their readers right along with them.

Landis was a delegate to the Fifth Mennonite World Conference in August, 1952, at Basel, Switzerland, but that was not the real reason he went to Europe. He had to see Switzerland (and the Palatinate), the ancestral homeland of his family and his church. He went to trace genealogical and historical connections from his beloved Lancaster County to their roots in the old world, and he found the connecting points everywhere. Landis' Lancaster County patriotism adds much spice to his writing, although one suspects the spice was always a part of his particular Landis style; and his deep religious interest and loyalty to his denomination add a dimension not often found in travelogues. Twelve descriptive chapters carry the reader along at a lively pace from Bareville to London to Weierhof to Basel to Hirzel-Zurich to Bern to Rome to Paris and back to Bareville. One chapter is devoted to the World Conference. There is not a dull page in the book, and the 100 illustrations, many of which are unusual, and four good maps enhance its value. Congratulations to the author, who though he may have long wanted to see Switzerland probably never originally intended to write a book about it.

*Goshen College* HAROLD S. BENDER